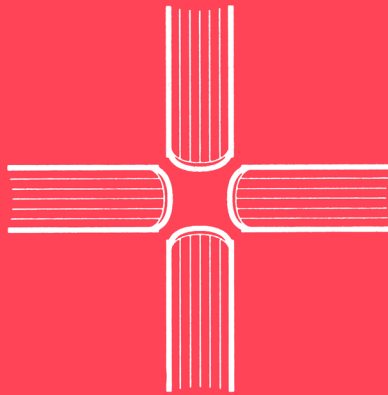


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LUTHERAN EDUCATION



In This Issue

- ▶ *Spiritual Development*
- ▶ *Affective Education*
- ▶ *Distance Learning*
- ▶ *Differently Abled*

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Articles

- Assessing Spiritual Development Of Students
Hal H. Whelply, Jr...... 124
- Affective Education In The Synodical College
Ken Schurb..... 134
- Distance Learning Is Here
Jonathan C. Laabs..... 141
- Re[form]ing Deformities
Michael J. Meyer..... 151

Features

Matters of Opinion

- A Dry Wit
Wayne Lucht..... 122

Administrative Talk

- The Administrator's Head--What Goes On In There?
Glen Kuck..... 163

DCE Expressions

- Are DCE's In The Intersection?
Steve Fehl..... 165

First Person Singular

- Silent Times Ahead?
Carl Schalk..... 169

Multiplying Ministries

- Words, Words, Words--And More Words!
Rich Bimler..... 171

Secondary Sequence

- Vision, Mission, Ministry, Message
Nathaniel Grunst..... 173

Teaching The Young

- Teachers And Teaching
Shirley K. Morgenthaler..... 175

The Gospel According To Winnie-The-Pooh

- Chapter Three In Which We Begin Again
Philip Heinze..... 178

A Final Word

- "Teaching As Patriotism"
George C. Heider..... 180

In This Issue

We understand that in the world of nature, animals take precautionary dietary steps to insure that they have ample resources to see them through the winter storms.

And so we come to your winter diet with a roughly analagous winter menu. Although the emphasis seems to be on higher education within the church body we call Missouri, implications for the themes of several of the articles reach out to those of us on the firing lines of parish service.

Certainly the problem of an adequate spirituality among ministers in the Lord's service should be of universal concern. And the roots of that spirituality reach back into the days of college preparation and before. *Hal Whelply* is concerned with assessing spiritual development of the students within the Concordia University System. There's enough ambiguity in the concepts to feed everyone's imagination, yet Whelply is brave enough to pare it down to manageable bites.

Then *Ken Schurb* makes an equally brave effort at addressing the problem of affective education on the collegiate level. Affective education? You know what that means, don't you? Well, it does have to do with how to wed the intellect to the emotions in the learning process. And that's as far as we'll go at this point. As some sage once said, "We think only now and then, but we feel all the time."

Jonathan Laabs takes us to some turf not nearly as daunting to some . . . and terrifying to others . . . as he addresses one of the most exciting frontiers before the field of education, namely, distance learning. Distance learning, we ask again? How do students on one campus learn from an instructor hundreds or thousands of miles away? Although initial work on this problem is being addressed on the college level, it has great implications for all ages and stages of development.

We thought you might want some relief from this heavy conceptual stuff and so we happily offer *Mike Meyer's* wise assessments of children's literature about the various physical handicaps that may afflict any age. The politically correct terms for such eludes this writer for the moment, but a quick scan of the books Mike annotates will quickly give you a sense of what he's up to. He has done this in prior issues to the enormous benefit of the classroom teachers and the learners under their care.

Fortunately, we have our usual stable of feature writers who mediate their topics in fewer words, respectful of the limited time for reading professional literature that is available to most of us. But don't use that as an excuse for by-passing the first several articles!

Keep cozy. Serve God . . . and the learners in your charge.

Matters Of Opinion

Wayne Lucht

A Dry Wit

One of the driest wits I have ever encountered was that of my chemistry professor. He also posed a great challenge to me when I joined the faculty and became his colleague. Somehow it took me a while to learn to call him “Butch”, a charming alias he used when phoning to remind me of some delinquency or other as he pursued his avocation as registrar.

He had never missed a synodical convention from the 1920's onward to the 1980's, I believe, so his sharp intellect and wry observational powers caused him to share with me what he thought should be a Scriptural watchword for each such assembly. It came from Job 38:1 where the Lord thunders to Job: “Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?”

For those of us who have squirmed through congregation or faculty or committee meetings of any sort that were bedeviled (!) by the presence of good intentions rooted firmly in ignorance, Butch's suggestion comes as a welcome relief to the frustration of having to hear the person out.

But before we become too proud in the conceit of our own alleged superior insights, it would be well to read the rest of chapter 38 and of chapter 39 to modify any flickering arrogance of spirit we might want to nurture into a full flame. The Lord makes us all aware that we simply don't know that much, or control that much, of the world. He's still in charge.

Butch's rootedness in Scripture was a constant source of delight to his colleagues and an inspiration to all of us to go and do likewise. Modeling such behavior to the learners under our charge is not the only reason for daily contact with Scripture. Crises can come upon us unawares where frantic searching of Scripture simply will not do to meet the challenge of the moment.

This truth came upon me personally with full force as a dear friend, wife of a treasured faculty member, was facing the terrors of an invasive cancer that would not be denied. What to say to her that would not sound like a pious patch job? When toward the end she allowed only a few of us to visit her, the time it took for her to look presentable by her standards grew longer and longer. After waiting about half an hour in one of these last visits, Luann walked unsteadily into the room and in her own wry, dry way said, “This

better be good!"

I'll remember those words till the Lord calls me home.

How does one respond to that challenge?

The answer came from Scripture later on that week, not at the moment I needed it. Toward the end of Psalm 17 which reads:

But as for me, my contentment is not in wealth but in seeing you and knowing all is well between us. And when I awake in heaven, I will be fully satisfied, for I will see you face to face.

She never lived to see her 56th birthday. How sorely I wished that. Although the Psalmist was speaking of his relationship to God, his desire for all things to be "well between us" could be spoken of all human relationships, in this case with that person I so wanted to comfort.

But the words "when I awake in heaven" had its own strength for easing of anxiety. Within two weeks, she did awake in heaven and faced the Lord with whom she was to be fully satisfied.

What does this all come down to?

For those of us who are "professional Christians" there is more than one reason to be richly immersed in Scripture on a day to day basis. This is the kind of spiritual discipline that cannot be deferred. The blessings that await all of us are simply too numerous to be counted.

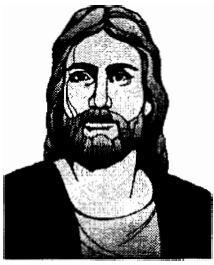
By the way, if you are not already acquainted with the various translations available in "The One Year Bible" series produced by Tyndale House Publishers, travel posthaste to your nearest book store and avail yourself of this strategy for putting yourself in daily contact with Scripture.†



From the Dedicated Early Support For Children At Risk (DESCAR) National Clearinghouse

The DESCAR handbook. *Rising Above At Risk*, (1995) is available from the DESCAR National Clearinghouse for \$5.00 plus shipping and handling. Call 708.488.4104 to order a copy now.

One-page, annotated bibliographies called "InfoSheets" are available on the following topics: "Faith And Moral Development," "Teaching Faith And Values In The Family," "Parenting Perspectives," "Dealing With Grief And Loss," and "early Childhood Care and Education." The InfoSheets are \$1.00 each, and can be ordered by calling the DESCAR National Clearinghouse at 708.488.4104.



Hal H. Whelply, Jr.

Assessing Spiritual Development Of Students In The Concordia University System

Introduction And Purpose

Calls for accountability, and attendant requirements for assessment of institutional effectiveness, permeate virtually every level of education today. In higher education, mounting pressure from the public in general as well as business, government and accreditation agencies, has prompted a wide variety of efforts to gauge effectiveness particularly in the area of student outcomes. Basic questions include the following:

Do today's college and university students receive a good education? Do graduates know what they should know? Can they do what they should be able to do with what they know?

Each of the ten institutions which constitute the Concordia University System (CUS) are affected by the call for assessment as much as any other school, whether church-based or secular, independent or public. Members of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod have long held good stewardship as a high value in all corporate enterprise; indeed, such stewardship of Christian higher education is essential in this time of rapidly escalating costs and expectations, and limited resources. Accordingly, the faculty and administrators on the campuses of the CUS share a vital interest in achieving high quality at each of the Concordias by the most efficient and effective means.

Of particular interest are the outcomes of a Concordia education in an area that might be called *spiritual development* (more on that term shortly). If the CUS can not be effective in fostering spiritual development in its students, there is little else which would distinguish any one of the Concordias from hundreds of small, four-year, liberal arts-oriented schools throughout the United States.

However, assessing the impact of even a single CUS institution on spiritual

Hal H. Whelply Jr., Ed.D., is Vice President, and Dean of Information Resources, at Concordia University, Irvine, California, where his responsibilities include directing the assessment program. During the 1995-96 academic year, he served as CUS Assessment Liaison, consulting with all CUS institutions, and Concordia Theological seminary, Ft. Wayne, IN, in the development of institutional assessment programs.

development is more easily said than done. Highly significant questions of terminology and definition emerge immediately in any effort to conceptualize such assessment (even before any of the daunting methodological challenges are considered). The first question to be addressed is: What shall we call this educational outcome we are attempting to bring about and somehow measure? Possibilities would seem to include the aforementioned *spiritual development* as well as *faith development*, *religious formation*, and *formation of Christian values*. Some readers may have quite specific definitions for these and, perhaps, more appropriate labels. However, careful exploration of the definition and ramifications of these and similar terms—an exceedingly important area of inquiry—is not the immediate purpose of this article; space limitations alone preclude such discussion.

For this article, the term *spiritual development* will be used in a general way to indicate *increased knowledge of Scripture, a growing acceptance of Scriptural values, and all that these phrases imply* (e.g., valuing of God's Law, reliance on the Gospel of Jesus Christ for salvation, the fruits of the Spirit in the life of a believer). Let it also be said at this point that basic Lutheran tenets regarding the nature of faith, the essential action of the Holy Spirit in bringing about faith, etc., are assumed and, therefore, not directly treated herein.

The purpose of this broad-brushstroke article, then, is to examine some contemporary issues raised in addressing this endeavor called *assessment* in relation to spiritual development on CUS campuses and, thereby, to pose questions for consideration of these readers interested in improving the effectiveness of Lutheran Christian higher education. There may be some readers who do not agree with statements made here; readers who believe short shrift was given critical material, or readers who have much more expertise to offer on a particular topic. This article will have accomplished its purpose to the extent that reactions result in constructive conversation within and between faculties of CUS institutions, and among interested persons across the System as well as those involved in K-12 Lutheran education and seminary education.

What Are We Doing? How Well? What Evidence Do We Have?

Assessment essentially attempts to answer three questions:

- ▶ What is it that the institution [or component part, e.g., degree program, major] claims to accomplish?
- ▶ How well is it accomplishing that which it claims to be doing?
- ▶ What evidence corroborates these claims?

In addition to the generally accepted components of a sound baccalaureate education, the Church holds other expectations for its institutions, as expressed in the “Statement of Mission and Purpose” for the CUS (hereinafter referred to as “mission statement” or “mission”):

Concordia University System builds national identity, enables cooperative endeavors, and enhances the strength of the colleges and universities of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod as they engage students of diverse ages and cultures in *quality, Christ-centered, value-oriented, Lutheran* higher education for lives of service to church and community [*italics added*].

Reasonable inference (drawn from the italicized words above) leads to the conclusion that the Church expects, and the System states its intention to pursue, opportunity for spiritual development in CUS students during their time on a CUS campus. Examination of the mission statement for any one of the ten CUS institutions will lead to the same conclusion for that college or university. A mission statement is the essential starting point for any assessment of institutional effectiveness. Therefore, a closer look at the CUS statement is necessary in a discussion of effectiveness of the System with regard to spiritual development. But first we must answer a question so basic that it easily could be overlooked: *Who are these “students” mentioned in the CUS mission statement?*

Age

As acknowledged in the mission statement, CUS students are “of diverse ages...” For various technical reasons, no formal analysis of CUS student median age has been possible as of this date. However, casual examination of some available data reveals in a notably aging population of junior and senior class undergraduates especially in schools that have introduced degree completion programs in the past few years. In general, it seems reasonable to conclude that the median age of the CUS student population probably is not significantly different from the population of higher education students in baccalaureate institutions across the country. The median age of CUS students most likely is moving upward, approaching age 30, in contrast to a more “traditional” student cohort of perhaps 15, 20 or more years ago which might have averaged closer to age 22 or 23 at graduation.

Race and Ethnicity

Table 1 shows CUS race/ethnicity figures for the past three academic years. This

quite limited period is selected simply to provide a sense of the nature and direction of the most recent available data. The time frame represented is too brief for drawing firm conclusions about long-term trends. However, these data do lead to the conclusion that a significant percentage of CUS students are Non-White. Note also that in recent years about 16–18% of students are of “unknown ethnicity” which very likely includes many Non-White, including those of mixed race. In general, the percentages represented here differ markedly from the racial/ethnic profile of a typical Concordia of 15, 20 or more years ago.

	FALL 1993		FALL 1994		FALL 1995	
Racial/Ethnic Group	Number	%-age	Number	%-age	Number	%-age
African-American	1106	9.9	1061	8.8	1203	9.5
Hispanic	229	2.1	314	2.6	323	2.5
Asian	385	3.5	244	2.0	254	2.0
Native American	19	0.2	23	0.2	23	0.2
International	348	3.1	399	3.3	407	3.2
<i>Total Non-White</i>	<i>2087</i>	<i>18.7</i>	<i>2041</i>	<i>16.9</i>	<i>2210</i>	<i>17.4</i>
Total White Non-Hispanic	7228	64.9	7872	65.2	8478	66.7
Unknown Ethnicity	1820	16.3	2164	17.9	2024	15.9
Total Headcount	11135		12077		12712	

Table 1
Racial/Ethnic Backgrounds of Part-Time and Full-Time Students
Concordia University System; Fall 1993, 1994 and 1995

Religious Affiliation

The CUS mission statement does not address diverse religious affiliations, but this too is a noteworthy characteristic of the population of System students. Figures in Table 2 show the recent numbers and percentages of students of the indicated religious affiliations. (The reason for slight discrepancies in total headcount numbers in Table 2 compared to those in Table 1 is unclear; in any event, the differences are not significant for the immediate purpose of this article.) These data reveal a significant proportion of CUS students to be of non-LCMS background, in

considerable contrast to the predominantly LCMS-populated campuses of 20 or more years ago. (Note also the small but steady increase in “Unchurched.”)

	FALL 1993		FALL 1994		FALL 1995	
Religious Affiliation	Number	%-age	Number	%-age	Number	%-age
LCMS	4368	38.3	4597	38.1	4630	36.3
Other Lutheran	602	5.3	806	6.7	976	7.7
<i>TOTAL LUTHERAN</i>	<i>4970</i>	<i>43.6</i>	<i>5403</i>	<i>44.7</i>	<i>5606</i>	<i>44.0</i>
Roman Catholic	1402	12.3	1907	15.8	2154	16.9
Baptist	573	5.0	618	5.1	684	5.4
Methodist	169	1.5	331	2.7	331	2.6
Presbyterian	113	1.0	163	1.3	160	1.3
Episcopal	68	0.6	86	0.7	80	0.6
Other Protestant	440	3.9	674	5.6	621	4.9
Jewish	38	0.3	34	0.2	32	0.3
Muslim	5	0.04	8	0.07	8	0.06
Other Denom	737	6.5	726	6.0	773	6.1
Unknown*	2567	22.5	1596	13.2	1678	13.2
Unchurched	312	2.7	531	4.4	611	4.8
<i>TOTAL NON-LUTHERAN</i>	<i>6432</i>	<i>56.4</i>	<i>6674</i>	<i>55.3</i>	<i>7132</i>	<i>56.0</i>
Total headcount	11402		12077		12738	

* Primarily in degree completion programs

Table 2
Religious Affiliation of Part-Time and Full-Time Students
Concordia University System; Fall 1993, 1994 and 1995

Other Characteristics and Environmental Factors

Given the variety of students now attending our Concordias, other differences naturally emerge. For example, with degree completion programs attracting working adults, some of whom are single parents, a growing number of CUS

students are highly-focused, task-oriented commuter students who have limited daily or weekly contact with a Concordia campus community. The influence that can be brought to bear on students whose time on campus is spent primarily in parking lots, classrooms, library, and vending machine areas, is notably different in depth and quality compared to the rich experience options the institution can present to residential students. Further, the advent of distance education, in which an increasing number of students will receive instruction primarily in their homes through videotape, cable TV, World Wide Web pages, CD-ROM, and e-mail, or some combination thereof, introduces more drastic limitations on conventional face-to-face contact.

Even among residential students, the costs of higher education today often require employment which may detract from time that might otherwise be available for involvement in campus activities. Reduced time in on-campus relationships generally results in reduced campus influence in the life and learning of such students (except, perhaps, in the case of those employed on campus).

In summary, the CUS student of the late 1990s is a very different student in comparison to those found on Concordia campuses in, say, the 1960s and 1970s. It is this contemporary student who must be kept very much in mind as we consider those basic assessment questions, now more specifically framed here in this way: *What are we doing in the CUS to promote spiritual development? How well are we doing these things? What evidence of spiritual development in CUS graduates can we provide?* For it is to these often-more-mature, less-available, most likely non-Lutheran, and racially/ethnically-diverse students to whom we must direct our efforts to accomplish our CUS mission.

Reality Check: The CUS Mission and CUS Student Demographics

The CUS mission statement appears to be an appropriately comprehensive, sturdy, and serviceable one; yet selected key phrases inevitably raise questions:

- ▶ “...value-oriented...”—*Which values?*
- ▶ “...lives of service...”—*What kinds of service?*
- ▶ “...to church...”—*Which church?*
- ▶ “...and community”—*Which community?*

The answer to the first question, “**Which values?**”, seems self-evident: the values of a Christ-centered institution of Lutheran higher education. But—and it may seem an odd question—what, exactly, are those? How many Concordias have specified these values and how they inform curriculum across the disciplines as well as co-curricular activities? These are questions of central importance which

require fresh, relevant answers based on timeless Scripture-centered truths. Only when such answers have been formulated can assessment plans be developed.

A suitable response to **“What kinds of service?”** is less obvious. Presumably *service* refers broadly to honorable, God-pleasing service to humankind. There appears to be nothing to limit the answer to the service rendered by professional church workers. Further, several mission or goal statements among CUS schools mention, in some form, the concept of productive citizenship which would seem to be related to a life of service. Yet examination of catalogs yields no easily discerned (if any) sense of overall, coherent design in how and where curriculum and co-curricular activities expressly attempt to inculcate this value. Clearly, additional work is needed here before meaningful assessment efforts can be planned.

Historically, **“Which church?”** would have been answered, “The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod.” However, as shown earlier, an increasing number of CUS students—possibly a *majority*—are *not* members of LCMS congregations. If these non-LCMS students are strongly affiliated with another Christian denomination or even another religion, they most likely will not become LCMS congregation members. Therefore, direct attempts to “...engage students...in Lutheran higher education...for lives of service to [The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod]...” seems ill-advised, at best. Thus, do we address efforts in behalf of this part of the mission statement only to our work with LCMS students? If not, how do we prepare students of diverse religious affiliations for “...lives of service to [their own] church[es]...”? Or, if they have none, how do we assist them in establishing an affiliation (presumably with the LCMS) so that we might accomplish this part of our mission? And, regardless of which students are under consideration, where exactly in the curriculum (and in co-curricular activities) do we explicitly and systematically attempt to do those things which increase the likelihood of producing professional church workers and skilled lay persons capable of rendering service to any church? What specific knowledge and skills will such laypersons need? When answers to these questions can be articulated, then we can begin planning for assessment.

“Which community?” is a vital question. Increasingly diverse students can be assumed to come from an increasing variety of diverse communities. Are CUS institutions preparing all students for service in a multitude of community types? If so—again—exactly how and where in curricular and co-curricular designs do we intentionally accomplish this? If our Concordias are *not* so preparing their graduates, why not? It can be argued that an undergraduate program which does not produce graduates capable of positive and respectful interaction within diverse communities does not produce graduates worthy of a baccalaureate degree. Further, professional church workers in particular need to function effectively in diverse settings if they are to have any hope of carrying out the Great Commission. Only

when we have identified exactly how and where we equip Concordia graduates to serve communities can we set in motion the means to assess their competencies and, thereby, the effectiveness of our CUS institutions.

Spiritual Development

In the context described above, then, what do we mean by the term *spiritual development*? What would the ideal *spiritually-developed* Concordia graduate be like, and how would the attributes of such a person be manifested? These are not easy questions.

- ▶ In Colossians 1:9–12, Paul provides some direction for understanding *spiritual development*:

For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light.

However, Paul here addresses believers. What is our task in relation to those who have not yet come to faith, or who do not rightly understand the Scriptures? Taken at face value, is the agenda in this passage somehow appropriate for those individuals as well? If so, how do we go about it? If not, what do we strive for, and what evidence of spiritual development shall we seek?

- ▶ However it is defined, bringing about spiritual development in students is ideally a collaborative endeavor which involves the entire institution, not just the religion or theology faculty, nor only the campus pastor or chaplain, nor even the entire faculty by itself. Student services staff, for example, will have great potential impact in an activity program which engages students in real-world field experience opportunities for exposure to Christian values and for acting upon them, thereby reinforcing classroom instruction. Obviously such cooperative programming will deal significantly with the affective domain as well as the cognitive. What campus organizational structures will most effectively provide for the integrative efforts needed to plan and implement learning experiences for spiritual development which will, of necessity,

emphasize relationships between people?

- ▶ How do we pursue spiritual development without seeming overbearing and insensitive? (Currently heard occasionally on at least one Concordia campus is the complaint, from non-Lutherans, that they feel religion is “crammed down our throats.”)
- ▶ How do we ask assessment questions which involve the fruit of the spirit in such a way that, in the asking, we do not implicitly emphasize good works as the *sine qua non* of saving faith? How do we do assessment of spiritual development in a way that is faithful to our Lutheran theology?
- ▶ How do we regard assessment data on spiritual development? If the results are not what we would hope for, does this necessarily implicate the selected content and/or the methodology, inside or outside the classroom, which students have experienced? (It could be observed that Elijah, Jeremiah, Paul, Jesus, and others in Scripture, did not always obtain what we would consider optimal results from their teaching and preaching—not all who heard them came immediately to faith.)
- ▶ How do we transmit effective Christian higher education through electronic means, to people we see face-to-face on a very limited basis? How do we ascertain our impact on their lives? Indeed, is such impact possible?

Conclusion

With the increasing prominence of distance education, the widespread re-examination of the nature of postsecondary education and resulting restructuring, and the proliferation of educational options, it appears that higher education will be available through a variety of means from numerous sources in coming decades. It is in the content of Lutheran Christian higher education, and its intrinsic values, that the Concordia University System will find its distinctive ministry and competitive edge. Potential students will be seeking what we have to offer, as they are today, in greater numbers. To be fully ready to serve them, it seems salutary and timely at this point in our CUS history to rediscover and redefine that edge for ourselves through careful analysis of what we are striving for in spiritual development of our students. In so doing we can sharpen our efforts so that they are of “cutting edge” quality, and pursue our ministry with renewed clarity of vision.†

End Notes

1. CUS World Wide Web home page, <<http://www.cus.edu/home/html>>

2. Phone conversation with BHE personnel, 6/28/96.
3. Derived from "Fall 1993-94 [1994-95][1995-96] Racial/Ethnic Background of Students: Colleges, Universities and Seminaries"; The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, Board for Higher Education; undated tables based on Integrated Post-secondary Educational Data system (IPEDS) data.
4. Derived from "Fall 1993[1994][1995]Student Population--Religious Affiliation"; The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, Board for Higher Education; undated table based on student registration data.
5. One might further ask how this orientation is manifested--what does "value-oriented" mean exactly?



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Available from Contemporary Books, Inc., Two Prudential Plaza, Suite 1200, Chicago, IL 60601-6790. (312) 540-4500; fax (312)540-4657. 1995. 320 pp., Paperbound. \$12.95.

Educational Leadership, October 1996



Ken Schurb

Affective Education In The Synodical College: Teaching Theology In The Traditional Program Classroom

Editor's Note: Space limitation's do not allow for inclusion of extensive "End Notes" the author appended to his article. Interested readers may request a copy of the End Notes by enclosing a stamped and self-addressed envelope with their request to the journal's River Forest office.

Education's affective domain is coming under coordinated scrutiny by Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod higher education professionals who want the Concordia University System to increase its emphasis of this dimension, especially in theology instruction. Of course, Synod's institutions of higher education have always featured teaching and learning in the affective domain. Moreover, in teaching the Christian faith, they have our Lord's own assurance that His Word never returns to Him void (Is. 55:11). None of this has changed. What is new is increased intentionality in affective domain instruction and the benefits expected from such intentional efforts.

Recently I taught in the theology department at Concordia, Ann Arbor after serving for four years as a pastor and some 2 ½ years of vacancy preaching in three LCMS churches prior to that. This parish experience heightened my awareness of the need to address head *and* heart in Christian education. This article will explore the challenge of transmitting the articles of faith in Bible survey and doctrine courses taught in a synodical college's traditional program. I will provide a few suggestions for college-level affective education, placed in the context of Lutheran theology.

Basic Premises

1. Modern literature on the affective domain notes that teaching with an emphasis on the cognitive will not necessarily yield the affective results one might desire. There is nothing "automatic" about particular kinds of growth in the affective domain. Nonetheless, although we can distinguish between the cognitive

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and affective domains, in practice we cannot separate them. Our shrewdest improvements in teaching will incorporate their simultaneity.

2. Educators who tend to fail in the affective domain often teach poorly in the cognitive domain. Teachers who are not moving beyond knowledge and comprehension to application, analysis, synthesis or evaluation in the cognitive domain are probably not reaching goals in the affective area that lead to commitment or internalization of a value system. This is no accident. Research shows that methods which tend to serve higher-order cognitive objectives also produce superior results in affective concerns such as attitude and motivation.

3. In general, an important step toward addressing poor teaching in both domains is to stimulate greater student involvement. A wise teacher once said, perhaps tongue in cheek, "When the teacher is talking, you have no idea what is going on with the students. When the students are talking, there's at least a chance that they are learning." He was right. A student once gratefully said to me, "In this class I can talk." Her subsequent fine development as a theology student, both cognitively and affectively, underscores how important this aspect of classroom culture can be.

4. At its best, the Lutheran tradition *has* recognized the heart's importance in Christian education. Luther held that the way to the heart was, so to speak, through the head. In the *Large Catechism* Preface, he wrote: "I read and recite word for word the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Psalms, etc. I must still read and study the Catechism daily, yet I cannot master it as I wish, but must remain a child and pupil of the Catechism, and I do it gladly." Luther maintained that affective benefits would derive from this cognitive process. "Even if . . . knowledge of the Catechism were perfect (though that is impossible in this life), yet it is highly profitable daily to read it and make it the subject of mediation and conversation." Luther had in view what we today might call learner involvement; he was obviously describing something other than listening to sermons. "In such reading, conversation, and mediation [*Lesen, Reden und Gedenken*]," he wrote, "the Holy Spirit is present and bestows ever new and greater light and fervor, so that day by day we relish and appreciate the Catechism more greatly." Luther was speaking of the affective domain, to be sure, but even more of God's miraculous power unleashed in reading, conversation, and mediation on His Word.

The Power Of God's Word

When we teach the Christian faith we can share Luther's joy over having a

“built-in” advantage, one that “touches” yet at the same time ranges far beyond today’s educational discussions of the affective domain. We can share his joy if like him we believe that the Gospel really is God’s power to save people (cf. Rom. 1:16). For Luther, God’s Word was “not like some empty tale.” Rather, “routs the devil and puts him to flight.”

The Bible is like a letter in which God Himself addresses us, said the old Lutheran theologians; yet it is better than a typical letter for in this case the Author comes right along with the missive to convey His blessings through the Gospel. God’s Gospel Word gives people cleansing (John 15:3), salvation (1 Cor. 15:1-2), new birth (1 Pet. 1:23), the Holy Spirit (Gal. 3:2), life (John 6:63; 2 Cor. 3:6), and salvation (1:21). At the same time, this Word brings about faith which grasps the blessings bestowed (John 17:20; Rom. 10:17; 2 Cor. 4:3-6; Acts 6:7). God’s creative Word can work in the affective domain like nothing else (Ps. 33:6, 9; 107:20; Rom. 4:17).

Thus, the *Formula Of Concord* affirmed that

neither the preacher nor the hearer should question this grace and operation of the Holy Spirit, but should be certain that, when the Word of God is preached, pure and unalloyed according to God's command and will, and when the people diligently and earnestly listen to and meditate on it, God is certainly present with His grace and gives what man is unable by his own powers to take or to give. We should not and cannot pass judgment on the Holy Spirit's presence, operations, and gifts merely on the basis of our feeling, how and when we perceive it in our hearts. On the contrary, because the Holy Spirit's activity often is hidden, and happens under cover of great weakness, we should be certain, because of and on the basis of his promise, that the Word which is heard and preached is an office and work of the Holy Spirit, whereby he assuredly is potent and active in our hearts.

Trying to improve affective instruction so people will perceive that they are being spiritually fed can turn out to be fruitless at best. The Holy Spirit’s working through the Word must remain an article of faith.

Then why should we give attention to the affective domain, also in teaching theology? Not because such study will enable us to make God’s Word any more powerful; it cannot. Nor should we let a psychological concept subtly turn into our real guide. Modern study of the affective domain remains a human construct which fits into God’s left-hand rule, and in using it we must let every thought be captive to Christ (2 Cor. 10:5). Rather, in the proper place an awareness of both the cognitive and affective domains can provide us a tool for preparing to deliver God’s

powerful Word to students. It helps to insure that we are not speaking the Word superficially. The prophet Nathan's approach to unrepentant King David showed sensitivity to David's personality which was probably informed by Nathan's own observations (2 Sam. 12:1-14). Nathan's little story did not substitute for or provide a supplement to Law-and-Gospel proclamation; instead, it served that proclamation. A theological tradition which holds that a student of theology is formed by *oratio*, *meditatio*, and *tentatio* [prayer, meditation, and struggle] can hardly ignore the affective domain.

Luther said the Holy Spirit is present in "reading, conversation, and mediation" on the catechism. In college theology instruction we can turn God's Word loose on students in a number of ways, realizing that the Word in all its forms bears God's own power.

A Few Suggestions

1. Law and Gospel.

- ▶ Verbalize the Gospel in class on a regular basis. Do not assume it. Spotlight Jesus the Savior of sinners (Jn. 5:39). You will do this most readily and joyfully the more you apply the Law and Gospel message to yourself.
- ▶ The Law must be expressed in class, spoken "spiritually"--exposing the full horror of the sinner's plight. A pet sin among theology students is forgetting that we are talking about *the living God* who kills and makes alive. Helmut Thielicke wrote of how "the flattening and relativizing of the gospel is the consequence of a very subtle and at first hidden occurrence; the role of one personally addressed by the divine message is changed for the role of a neutral observer."
- ▶ Faith "believes not only the history but also the effect of the history, namely, this article of the forgiveness of sins--that is, that we have grace, righteousness, and forgiveness of sins through Christ." On account of Christ sin has been removed as far as the east is from the west (Ps. 103:12), drowned in the depths of the sea (Mi. 7:19), left nailed to His cross when He rose from the dead (cf. Col. 1:13-14). The Gospel says that all this is for you, the precious *for you* character of the Gospel.

2. Have a Theme.

Not only religion courses have drowned students in a sea of disconnected detail.

Some time ago George Williams characterized history courses: “as a rule, the university’s most perfect type of the fact-loaded, idea-absent, academic exercise.” For example, “While the professor lectures on . . . the strategy of the Battle of Cowpens, the tactics of the Battle of Cowpens, the logistics of the Battle of Cowpens, the personalities of the opposing generals in the Battle of Cowpens . . . the great ideas and forces of history are lost in the flood of facts.” Williams pleaded: “Cannot history be taught so as to have . . . a meaningful relationship to the fundamental motives, habits, aspirations, psychological peculiarities, self-deceptions, hypocrisies, and grandeurs of human nature; and a meaningful relationship to the present? It can! And if history can, theology certainly can!!”

One of several ways to address this problem is to have a theme, not only an overall theme such as Law and Gospel but also a discrete and well-articulated focus of attention for each class session. It need not be deep or profound. For example, to posit “Doctrine Affects Life” as the main thought for a session introducing I and II Thessalonians may not provide the most fulsome possible use of textual material, but it does form a center around which themes from the two letters can be organized in a student-oriented way.

Biblical narratives can be treated thematically too. The Acts 15 apostolic council constitutes an example of handling church conflict. The account of Paul’s second missionary journey, a trip marked by several unexpected twists and turns, has a thematic summary in the words of the Thessalonian Jews about the Christians, “these men have turned the world upside down” (Acts 17:6). “When we apply a narrative . . . we should not seek to ‘put ourselves into the story.’ Rather, **we should attempt to see how we participate in the same underlying reality and attempt to determine what the story tells us about that reality, and, therefore, about us, our situation, and our destiny.**”

3. Where possible, relate the text to something familiar to students.

Example: the sons and daughters of Joshua’s “faithful generation” were marked by a yearning for relevance, fragile egos, giving up too soon, and wanting desperately to be liked. Their whole culture was in adolescence! Of course, the problem was more than “adolescence”; it was *sin*, as depicted vividly in Judges 1-3. But college students can easily understand and identify with this particular mode of sinfulness.

Character studies in Biblical narratives (e.g., Jacob, Moses, Peter, Paul) can prove helpful in this connection. Students readily recognize something familiar in saints of old.

Here, as elsewhere, illustrations and vivid language show their worth. Though perhaps mentioned more frequently in connection with preaching than with

teaching, these tools find a home in classroom as well as pulpit. Luther wrote about the affective power of language, especially the original languages of the Bible in the hands of a trained preacher (we might say instructor):

Although faith and the gospel may indeed be proclaimed by simple preachers without a knowledge of languages, such preaching is flat and tame; people finally become weary and bored with it, and it falls to the ground. But where the preacher is versed in the languages, there is a freshness and vigor in his preaching, Scripture is treated in its entirety, and faith finds itself constantly renewed by a continual variety of words and illustrations [1524].

(Note once more that Luther was concerned about an affective phenomenon, boredom. But his answer for it lay in the rigorous study and faithful exposition of God's Word.)

4. Engage the students.

If a given topic holds little importance for students, an instructor can at times "put it on their map" by having them invest more than a little time and effort in it. Major research papers for which students can select topics have served as tried and true tools in this cause.

In Bible in the Ancient World courses at Ann Arbor, I gave students an option to read Paul Maier's *Pontius Pilate* or *The Flames of Rome*. Not only did these documentary novels introduce students to the first-century Roman world; they also gave readers a "feel" for events important to the faith. "That [book] was awesome," I heard one student tell another. I do not think he would have made that comment about several other, less-involving projects he could have chosen.

Simulations and role-plays provide still another way of involving students. As they are challenged to act the part of a Biblical character, for example, students can in some fashion "walk in someone else's shoes" and in some measure think and feel as the subjects did. They can hear the Word "afresh," as it addressed someone else, before they think of how it impacts on them. I had students in Bible survey courses simulate the trials of Jeremiah and Jesus, and the dialogs in the book of Job. The key to this approach lies in adequate preparation, supervised by the instructor via advanced conferences with the students in the simulations.

5. Affective dividends paid by cognitive dissonance

Instead of dwelling on easily-recognizable aspects of the Bible and theology or easing into these gradually, students are at times profitably brought up short when

confronted by a basic contrast between their thinking and the Scriptures. Cognitive dissonance can provide us with an important affective tool, leading either to a reordering of values and priorities when old ones are weighed and found wanting or a reaffirmation when old ones are vindicated. For this to happen, students must entertain questions about matters which they have taken for granted.

The process may start **“when the teacher so structures the teaching process that the students are fully aware that what they are being taught stands in contrast to what they now think”** --that is, **“to what their old Adam thinks.”** Cognitive dissonance has great potential to help us teach the Law-Gospel relationship and other paradoxes.

Other uses of cognitive dissonance can include dialogs between students. In Bible survey class, for instance, I assigned two groups of students to write papers on King David. One group read chapters in which David's failures and sins stand out. This exercise led to a discussion of what it meant for David to be “a man after God's own heart” and eventually to illustrate the truth that when someone is saved God gets all the glory, but one who is lost has only himself or herself to blame.

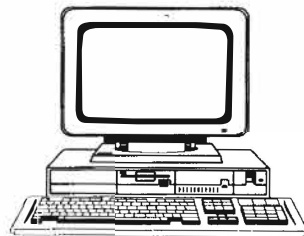
In doctrine class, I involved students in “disputations” at least somewhat like those of Luther's day. One small team of students formulated and distributed in advance a set of theses which a second team would attack. After a time devoted to oral exchange between the two “sides,” any other student in the class could join the discussion. This turned out to be an extremely worthwhile technique, provided that 1) the theses were well-formulated, significant, and focused; 2) there was ample time after the end of the disputation itself (but during the same class period) to conduct a thorough discussion of the disputation, noting good points made, where the argument turned, etc.; and 3) the students on the two teams could do a meaningful follow-up written assignment reflecting on the disputation. Several students told me that they were enjoying learning thereby what it meant to be Lutheran, and learning to appreciate it as never before.

Conclusion

I have provided but a few suggestions for college religion in the affective domain. Other classroom approaches are possible, of course. All in all, we can educate with confidence that our teaching of God's Word, when theologically sound and cognitively appropriate, *will* bring about affective results because the Lord Himself works through that Word.

On an evaluation form a student wrote that although a certain faculty member “laughs . . . my faith grew a lot” due to doctrine class. I take the student's words at face value, and I rejoice over the Holy Spirit's work in this young person's life. As for my colleague who thought growth in faith was unlikely in a doctrine course, I wonder if he doesn't reflect our greatest problem as regards affective education in the synodical college theology classroom.†

Distance Learning Is Here!



Consider the following three scenarios involving elements of teaching and learning needs. Do any of the situations sound familiar?

1. Sue is a primary grade teacher in a south Florida Lutheran school. She was not trained at an LCMS institution, but has enjoyed four years of experience in the Lutheran system. Her Board of Education is encouraging her to pursue her colloquy. However, she is not located anywhere near a Concordia college or university, and has determined that the time and cost involved with completing her classes on a Concordia campus are prohibitive. Though some colloquy classes are offered in parts of Florida every so often, Sue's family and work commitments cause her to require a more convenient solution.
2. A small Lutheran high school located in a rural area of the Midwest has had trouble providing sufficient offerings for its students in certain specialized areas including foreign languages, sociology, and AP English. Several local public schools have experienced the same challenges. Administrators would also like to identify ways in which their students could become more familiar with the Concordia University System institutions as they consider college prospects. Unfortunately, the closest CUS campus is several hundred miles away.
3. Several Concordia colleges and universities have had to drop courses that have been under-enrolled in a given semester. These courses are necessary for the successful completion of key programs at the institutions. Qualified faculty members in these areas are scarce, though such individuals are available on other CUS campuses. Those instructors who are teaching classes with the minimum enrollment would like to use resources from other campuses to supplement their instruction.

All three scenarios present challenges associated with differences in time and/or

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location of the instructor and the learner. Such barriers have often prevented an educational experience from taking place. Today, a new opportunity exists to break down these barriers and to discover means by which teaching and learning can be enhanced. What follows is intended as an introduction to this new frontier in Lutheran education: **Distance Learning**.

A Definition

What *distance learning* is **not**:

- the technology itself
- short cuts to teaching and learning
- replacements for qualified instructors
- “talking heads”; no opportunity for interaction
- a passing fad

What *distance learning* is:

Perhaps the best operating definition to use at this point is *mediated instruction necessitated by separation of teacher and students in time and/or place*. To properly understand the true meaning of distance learning (also known as “distance education”), one must place proper emphasis on several important components of this definition. First of all, the teacher and the student are *not* together. An instructor driving 100 miles to meet with a class is *not* an example of distance learning. Secondly, *instruction* is at the core of the need for distance learning. This is more than casual conversation or entertainment. All the important ingredients of good teaching and learning (pedagogy) must be taken into consideration. Finally, because the teacher and student are separated, a *medium* of communication other than face-to-face is necessary.

Various examples of learning environments as they pertain to location and timing variables are presented on the matrix in Figure 1. The more traditional teaching/learning situations with which we are familiar are referenced in the upper left quadrant, where teacher and students are located in the *same* place and at the *same* time. This is not distance learning, though technology may play a role in *supporting* such instruction (e.g. E-mail, videotapes).

Distance learning can take place where combinations of *different* time and place variables are involved. Workstations equipped with such technologies as computers, VCRs, or videodisc players, for instance, may be present in a location where teachers and student both have access, but at different times (upper right quadrant). Where teacher and student are separated by distance, and

DISTANCE LEARNING: TIME AND SPACE VARIABLES

Timing Of Communication

Same

Different

LOCATION OF COMMUNICATION

Same

TRADITIONAL

- Face-To-Face
- Meetings
- Classes

WORK STATION
(Time Shifting)

- VCR
- Computer
- Interactive Videodisc

Different

REAL TIME DISTANCE
LEARNING

- Audio conferencing
- Interactive TV (2-way video and 2-way audio)
- Satellite Courses (1-way video and 2-way audio)
- Synchronous Computer Comm.

ASYNCHRONOUS DISTANCE
LEARNING

- Correspondence Courses
- Video-based Telecourses
- Computers and Modems
- Multimedia on Demand (Just in time)

communicating with each other at the same time is not possible or not an option, several forms of “asynchronous” distance learning are available (lower right quadrant). Video-taped classes and E-mail are two popular examples of such applications. “Real time” experiences between teacher and learner (which incorporate the interactive features normally associated with traditional classes) are possible from a distance using such technologies as satellite delivery, audio conferencing, and interactive television (lower left quadrant). These experiences normally involve two-way audio and either one-way or two-way video.

The technology that makes any combination of distance learning experiences possible will be described later in the article. However, it must be noted here that technology is only *one component* of effective distance learning. In fact, as in traditional classroom instruction, the technology itself should be carefully chosen for its ability to *support* effective teaching and learning. Following are additional elements critical to successful distance learning experiences:

Instructional design - Everything an instructor would do to design and prepare for a traditional class must be done for distance learning experiences. Context analysis, articulation of goals and objectives, selection of learning activities and resources, design of appropriate measurement and assessment instruments, and monitoring and adjustment of the learning process are just a few of the essential activities for the instructor before and during the experience.

Management tasks - There are a number of unique factors involved with distance

learning related to management: student motivation, teacher/student communication between classes, tests and quizzes, learner feedback, interaction strategies (to name only a few).

Active learner participation - Students and teachers may tend to feel “removed” because of their distance from each other. A variety of instructional strategies should be implemented to make the distance learning experience as much like a face-to-face experience as possible. Whether “synchronous” learning is taking place or not, the students and instructor need many opportunities for interaction along the way.

What is *distance learning*? It’s active student participation, quality instructional design, new management tasks, and a new set of strategies for teaching via some form(s) of technology.

Why Distance Learning?

An easy answer to the question of “why distance learning” might be inherent in its definition. If instruction is desired, yet not possible because of “separation of teacher and student in time and/or place,” distance learning *may* be the solution. Barriers of distance or location can be broken through increased access to information and instruction and by providing a more convenient means of connecting teacher to students as well as students to each other. Again, intelligent decisions about whether or not this mediated form of education should be implemented must be made based on a variety of factors, especially the objectives set for the instruction.

A number of concerns about education at all levels has precipitated a growing amount of discussion about the place of distance learning in teaching and learning:

- declining student enrollment
- declining student performance
- increasing transportation costs
- competition for instructors
- low incidence classes
- mandated equality in education
- competition for tax dollars (or other forms of support)
- complexity of skills required by modern society
- increase in illiteracy

To address these and other concerns, various forms of distance learning at the

elementary, secondary, and higher education levels have been suggested. Depending on the medium chosen, some of the benefits of distance learning related to these concerns may include:

- sharing of resources
- improved access to instructors
- enhanced curriculum
- improved educational quality
- specialized instruction
- greater access to students of all ages
- ability to maintain a competitive workforce
- professional development
- realized efficiencies
- new partnerships

As the opportunities for applying distance learning grow and as the benefits become more evident, the question of “why” will begin to fade. Perhaps the greatest potential for the use of the distance learning technology stems from the network of schools, congregations, districts, and other church-related entities that the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod already has in place. A growing need to be connected to each other and to related entities outside the LCMS will determine the extent to which distance learning will have its place in the mission and ministry of the Church. The technology itself will continue to change and make further development in distance learning even more exciting.

Why Now?

Distance learning is not new. The need to learn despite a physical separation of teacher and student dates back to ancient civilizations. However, printed or written correspondence were the only means of delivery in most distance learning applications until fairly recent times. Formal correspondence courses were an innovation of the 1920s. As radio and television grew into society, so did their capacity as media for distance learning. However, early applications of these media for instruction often failed for lack of proper planning as the wave of the future. But it must be said: the future is now!

There are two major reasons for distance learning taking center stage in the last few years:

1. *People and society* are changing. More women are working outside the home. Employers are raising their expectations for the educated job force. As a result, the

paradigm is shifting to a “non-traditional” student population, now comprised to a greater extent of adult learners ages 25-40 (and older!). It is estimated that by the year 2000, the number of graduates 25 years of age or older will account for more than half of all college graduations. These adult students and their families are more mobile and often move to areas of the country (and overseas) where traditional forms of education are not as readily available. In short: more needs have arisen related to time and space variables!

2. *Technological advancements* in the last decade have escalated the ways in which people’s needs can be met. Among the most important:

- **The computer:** Most people now tend to take for granted the significance of the microchip and all of its related developments over the years. Computer technology is at the heart of just about all forms of distance learning. Most people now have access to a computer at home and/or work; most have already found ways to “get connected” through telecommunications.

- **Asynchronous Communication Systems:** Based on computer-related technologies such as phone mail, computer conferences and bulletin boards, and other familiar technologies such as videotapes, videodiscs, and audio cassettes, it is more likely than ever to provide “time shift” communication between teacher and learners and among learners. The ability to originate and respond to messages when it is most convenient, to watch a videotape at a time that works into the learner’s schedule, and the availability of audio, video, and data resourced “on demand” are just a few of the ways in which technology has allowed for adjustments to changes in lifestyle.

- **Increased Storage Capacity:** Vast amounts of information can now be stored on devices that are easily accessible and fairly cost-effective for the average learner at a distance. It is often not even necessary to access such information at a remote location. Advancements in computer and CD-ROM storage capacity have made volumes of data easily accessible in the home or business!

- **Signal Transporting Systems:** In order to carry a signal of any type (audio, video, or data) from one person to another at a distance, some form of “transport system” must be used. It boils down to the size of “bandwidth” that a system is supplied with: the degree to which a little or a lot of information can be transported from one place to another. Significant developments in this area are in fiber-optic cable, satellite uplink and downlink, and the use of regular telephone lines. It is now possible to “compress” video signals so that they can be sent and received through the same lines that people around the world have been using for audio (and more recently, data) calls.

- **Integration of Voice, Data and Video:** The term “multimedia” has taken on new significance as technology has advanced to the point where data

communications, audio communications, and video communications can now be literally merged and transported from offices to schools to remote sites and to a desktop workstation in the home! Teachers and students at any site can now be connected without the limitations traditionally inherent in telephone systems, video equipment, and computers. The common denominator is “digital.” With the right type of equipment at the user’s site, just about anything can be received and sent for distance learning applications.

Distance Learning In The LCMS

Though many institutions and individuals have participated in activities over the years that could technically be considered “distance learning” (e.g. correspondence courses, interactive cable classes, videotaped courses), a systematic plan for the formal introduction and implementation of distance learning in LCMS congregations, schools, and other entities was not in place by the time of the Synodical Convention in 1992. Because of the directive given by the delegates at that time to form a Concordia University System (CUS), twelve strategic initiatives were begun the following year. A team was formed to begin work on initiative #7: Distance Learning.

One of the team’s first priorities was to develop a statement of philosophy and rationale for instituting distance learning in the Concordia University System. Following are the major goals the team established for what was to initially become known as CENet (the Concordia Education Network):

1. Creation of inter-institutional distance learning opportunities
2. Provision of an infrastructure by which campuses can pursue the development of regional distance learning opportunities
3. Development and support of technological connections with other regional and national constituencies

Though during the early stages of planning for distance learning the team’s emphasis was on setting up an infrastructure and applications for the CUS, it was apparent that some of the most exciting potential for distance learning in Lutheran education would be the next stages involving P-12 schools, congregations, district offices, and other church-related entities. In addition, it was recognized that new relationships with sister colleges and universities and other public institutions would inevitably come to the surface once the initial stages of distance learning were in place.

It was important early on to set some guidelines on the basis of which future distance learning development would be based. Among the first set of guiding

assumptions were:

- Educational quality in distance learning experiences must be equal to or exceed that found in on-campus experiences.
- Distance learning offerings must insure inclusion of appropriate faith-learning connections unique to CUS institutions.
- Distance learning must incorporate interactivity between an instructor and the student.
- Distance learning offerings must provide opportunities to enhance instructional, curricular, and human diversity on participating campuses.
- Standards of technology, instructional design and production, site management and personal and business administration will be needed to maximize the efficient use of information technologies and distance learning.
- The development of human resources in support of the infrastructure must be viewed as a need equal to the development of fiscal and technological resources.

It should also be noted that one major concern for the team and for dozens of individuals who were interviewed was that the “human touch” would not be lost because of the distance factor and in favor of the technology. Any activities using distance learning are to involve at least some elements of face-to-face interaction supported by regular interaction using various technologies. Indeed, interaction is central to all distance learning and must be emphasized with each experience.

Development of the technological framework for distance learning was based on a “multi-layered” approach to delivery systems. Distance learning activities could involve any one strategy, or combination of strategies, depending on intended outcomes, participants, and instructional design. The five “layers” are:

1. Compressed video (two-way video and audio)
2. Satellite (one-way video, two-way audio)
3. Video tape (one-way video and audio)
4. Internet (synchronous: real time or asynchronous: delayed time)
5. CD-ROM and Compact Disc Interactive (interactive capabilities)

The first two years of distance learning development for the Concordia University System led to a technology audit of all ten Concordia campuses (including interviews with key personnel) and the establishment of individual team member responsibilities for instructional design, faculty development and training, course selection development and scheduling, assessment and accreditation, policy maintenance, technology development, and site manager training.

In January-May of 1996, Concordia, Ann Arbor and Concordia, Irvine conducted the first live interactive class involving the use of compressed video, the Internet, and videotape. Concordia, Austin and Concordia, River Forest continue to produce videotape resources for instructional purposes in classrooms and on cable systems. In fall of 1996, four two-way video interactive courses involved students on nine of the ten CUS campuses. Plans are being made to add another six classes in spring of 1997. The two seminaries and the International Center will also begin to participate in distance learning activities during the last half of the 1996-1997 academic year.

Lutheran Education and Distance Learning

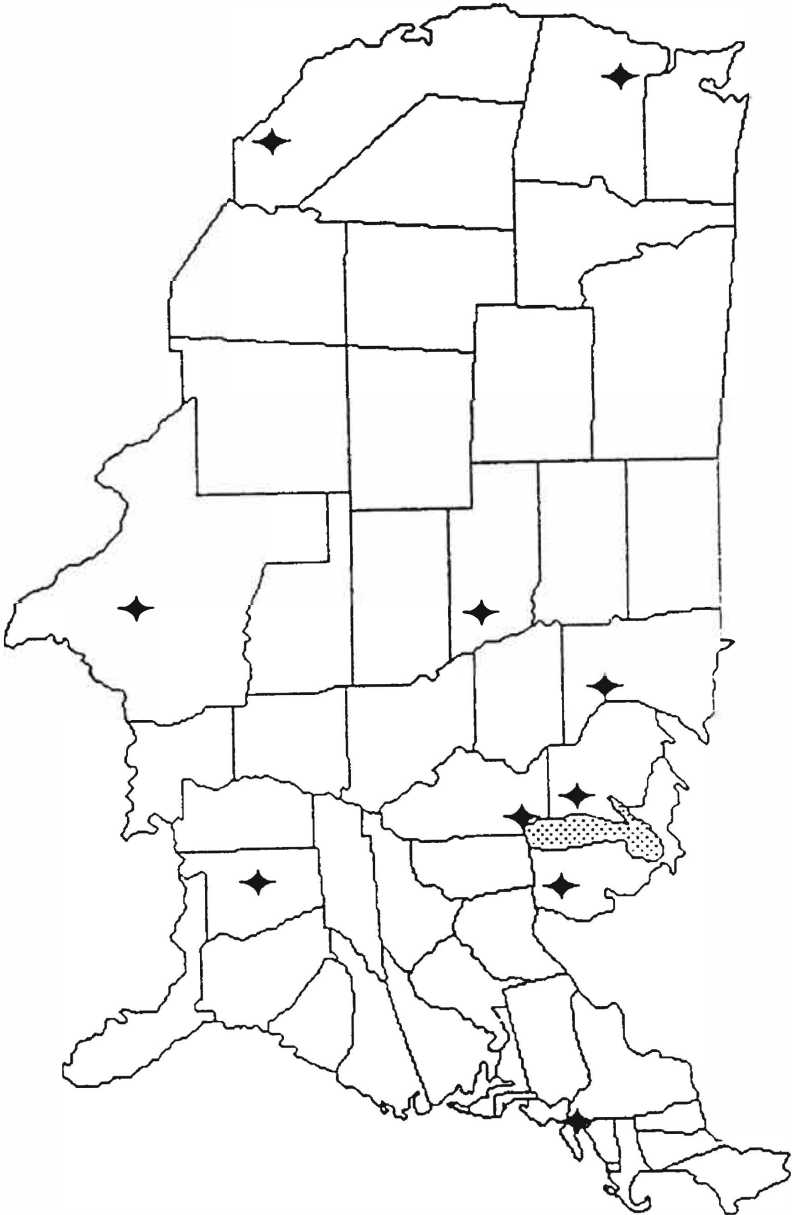
It was obvious to the team developing distance learning for the Concordia University System that this exciting new adventure in teaching and learning is both complex and rewarding. It is too early to determine exactly how successful the use of distance learning has been for the CUS. To date, research has indicated that students do not necessarily learn any better at a distance, nor do they learn any less. The experience has, however, caused educators to raise questions about both traditional and non-traditional education for today's learners. It has also opened new avenues for collaboration among Lutheran education entities of the LCMS. What has begun within the CUS must now be extended to the rest of the system. What are the potential impacts of distance learning on Lutheran education in the future?

During 1997, several distance learning projects will be initiated that involve education at the P-12 and congregational levels of the LCMS and relate to continuing initiatives of the Concordia University System. Initial exploration of less expensive "rollabout" interactive video systems for the classroom and "desktop" (computer based) video will all make possible distance learning applications between high school students and college instructors. Colloquy and PELT classes will be offered to students in areas of the country that are currently inaccessible by other means. Videotaped programming and satellite transmission of continuing education classes will draw "non-traditional" students to Concordia programs. Students and teachers in elementary schools on the west coast will be able to conduct "on-line" experiments with students on the east coast. Faculty members in the south will share an inservice with their colleagues in the midwest.

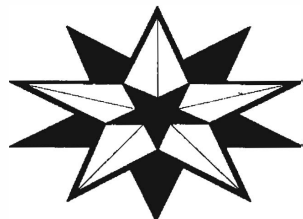
This next level of distance learning activities falls under the coordination of a newly formed initiative called CUENet: Concordia University Education Network.

All of the above applications are possible because technology has allowed us to break the barriers of time and space. The first step has been taken in a new journey toward enhanced education opportunities for learners and teachers of all

ages and backgrounds. Distance learning is certain to be one of the next big stories of how God equips His people to carry out the Great Commission. The chapter on how Lutheran educators embrace the technology and respond to this new gift has yet to be written.†



Michael J. Meyer



Re[form]ing Deformities

Over the past decade in the States, many schools have been teaching their students to practice increased sensitivity toward minority groups. Nowhere has this been more evident than in the programs begun to help students accept and appreciate people with disabilities or those who are “differently-abled.” Some critics have labeled this educational effort as merely part of a political correctness movement that substitutes euphemisms for cold hard facts, while on the other hand, supporters would view it as a compassionate effort to recognize the potential contributions of this increasingly large section of the larger community without displaying demeaning or condescending attitudes.

Though arguments will continue about the motives for such increased sensitivity training as well as its appropriateness, there is no doubt that it has had a positive effect on school communities. Though some of our parochial schools have been far-sighted in terms of dealing with this “touchy” subject, we still have a long way to go before a majority of our students can be said to have been exposed to learning units that broaden knowledge about the differently-abled.

Following the lead of public schools (such as the John Long Middle School in Grafton, Wisconsin), I believe more Lutheran schools need to sponsor annual “Disability Awareness Days” complete with guest speakers. Grafton’s program, for example, has been in place for twelve years already and gives their students an opportunity to see first hand that they need not harbor fears or superstitions over those who outwardly appear “different.” As part of the emphasis, speakers with various disabilities are invited to schools to demonstrate not only the difficulties these individuals face in an environment that is sometimes hostile to the differently-abled but also to testify to the determination of these individuals to function in much the same way as “normal” individuals do. “Changed people” have resulted according to Grafton school officials, who marvel at the program’s impact on their students and the sense of empathy and respect that it has initiated in their community.

Beginning such educational initiatives, however, also requires teachers who are well aware of the teaching aids which are available to them. Especially valuable are first hand accounts. For example, during the 70's and 80's Grace Lutheran School, River Forest, IL routinely asked Margaret Pfrommer, paraplegic from a

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childhood case of polio, to visit classrooms and talk to children. Miss Pfrommer, who at one time was a vocal advocate for the differently-abled and was a visual demonstration that much was possible even when an individual's arms and legs didn't work. With the aid of her "puff and sip" wheelchair, Margaret held down a job and even served as a lobbyist for the rights of the differently-abled in Washington, D.C.

Similarly, according to Steve King, 6th grade teacher at Hong Kong International School, having a wheel-chair bound student has been a benefit rather than a hindrance and has created great learning opportunities for his classroom. King found that Eric, suffering from muscular dystrophy and the first "differently-abled" student admitted to HKIS, was a positive bonding element for his class and made his "normal" students stop and think how much they took for granted in their lives. For example, King notes his class has become more concerned about each other, more eager to create a sense of belonging for each of their peers, and more reflective about how they can be helpful citizens in the wider community, not just toward their "differently-abled" peer. "Eric's major concern was that the other kids knew his disability wasn't contagious," stated King, "and he was happy to answer questions about his illness so that the class could be well informed rather than superstitious and wary."

Besides first-hand accounts, knowledge of books by, about, written by, and designed for the "differently-abled" is yet another key ingredient to developing student sensitivity to this issue. But reading aloud or guiding students to appropriate level books can only be accomplished when teachers familiarize themselves with the materials which are available. Following *Lutheran Education's* earlier emphases on descriptions of children's and young adult literature which was appropriate for children experiencing divorce and was designed for those struggling to cope with human death, this third article in the series offers readers short summaries of books related to disabilities and to stories of the "differently-abled." This list cites books which are appropriate for the various grade levels and for different age groups and also provides addresses of support groups for siblings.†

Bibliography

Adam, Barbara. *Like It Is: Facts And Feelings About Handicaps From Kids Who Know*. New York: Walker and Co., 1978. Gr. 4 - 8.

First person accounts by children who have been labeled as handicapped. Readers will meet Danny, who has a hearing problem; Toni, whose vision is impaired; Sheila, who is mildly retarded; Matt who has a perceptual handicap and Ken, Laura and John who have behavior disorders. Easy to read collection of first

hand recollections will help students step into the shoes of kids who seem different.

Burnett, Frances Hodgson and Lois Lowry. *The Secret Garden*. Toronto: Bantam, 1987. Gr. 3-6.

The classic children's tale of spoiled ten-year Mary who comes to live with her uncle in Yorkshire after the death of her parents in India. She discovers an invalid cousin who is wheelchair-bound, but she also discovers a way to overcome the gloomy surroundings through a secret garden which she and a young gardener restore, bringing life again to the whole household.

Byars, Betsy and Constantinos CoConis. *The Summer Of The Swans*. Harmonsworth, England: Puffin Books, 1981

Winner of the Newberry Award in 1971, this is the story of a young girl's insight into herself and into her family after her mentally retarded brother got lost.

Cohen, Miriam. *See You Tomorrow, Charles*. New York: Greenwillow, 1983. Gr. K-2.

This picture book tells about Charles who is visually impaired. Although the students in his first grade class try to understand Charles's needs, they tend to be patronizing rather than helpful and fail to realize how competent Charles is despite the fact that he is legally blind. When the class goes out for recess, Charles and two other children play make believe and mistakenly go into the school basement where the door accidentally closes. It's so dark that only Charles, using his other senses, is able to find and reopen the door. The class celebrates Charles's ability, and by the time school is over for the day, they have learned to treat him like the rest of their classmates as they happily join in the title farewell.

Cown-Fletcher, Jane. *Mama Zoom*. New York: Scholastic, 1993. Gr. K-2.

An easy to read book about Mama's ability in a wheelchair. The soft pastel illustrations help readers envision a 4 year-old child's imaginary adventures with his differently-abled mother. Her little boy compares her to a racehorse, a ship, a race car, an airplane, a train, a buckboard wagon, a wave and a spaceship. The book was inspired by the author's sister who was left a paraplegic after a 1987 accident.

Hanlon, Emily. *It's Too Late For Sorry*. New York: Bradbury Press, 1977. Gr. 5-8.

This is the story of a high school friendship between Kenny Shea and Phil

Canady. The boys' relationship is tested when a retarded teenager, Harold Havermeyer, moves into the neighborhood. While Phil teases and frustrates Harold, Kenny tries to help him learn. While aiding in Harold's socialization, Kenny meets Rachel who also volunteers with younger retarded children. Eventually, after being needled and mocked by Phil, Kenny rejects Harold and denies being his friend. Terribly hurt, Harold runs away and is severely beaten before he is discovered and returned home. Kenny then must accept responsibility for his actions and make his peace with others whom he has hurt. The ugly reactions toward those who are retarded are shown forcefully along side the compassionate and caring ones.

Jones, Rebecca C. *Angie And Me*. New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1981. Gr.4-8.

Jenna is forced to spend the summer in the hospital when she is diagnosed with juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis. She experiences loneliness and boredom, daily humiliations and nightly discomforts and has to perform painful therapy sessions. Eventually she accepts that arthritis is not just an old people's disease that can be cured by taking aspirin. She learns how to cope through the help of other children in the long term children's ward, especially Angie Salvador, who suffers from a rare blood disorder. Other differently-abled individuals include Wendy who has been paralyzed in a car accident: Bill, whose leg is amputated because of cancer, and Sam who had a tumor removed from his head. Though Angie eventually dies, she teaches Jenna to hope and to keep on trying even when the odds seem against her.

Laird, Elizabeth. *Loving Ben*. New York Delacorte Press, 1988. Gr. 4-9.

Laird's story begins with the sudden birth of Ben and is seen through the eyes of his sister, 12 year Anna, who serves as the narrator of the novel. Since Ben is a hydrocephalic baby, Anna's reaction is to love Ben more, making him laugh, cuddling him, teaching him. She'd like to protect him and stay in a magical world where Ben would be accepted as normal. Anna tries to balance her caring for Ben with her own life and finds it exceedingly difficult. She is especially sensitive to others who treat Ben as an object of sympathy or as a monstrous mistake. As Anna teaches her friends what Ben is really like, the reader learns about society's own misconceptions and about the demands Ben's care makes on his family. When Ben dies, Anna fills her life by helping another child, a little girl named Jackie who has Down's syndrome. Anna helps Jackie's mom, Miss Maynard, realize that cuddling and spoiling aren't helping Jackie and serves as a role model for the Maynard family about letting Jackie try to do things for herself.

Lee, Jeanne M. *Silent Lotus*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1991. Gr. K-3.

Set in Cambodia, this is the story of Lotus who because of being deaf is unable to learn to speak. The colorful picture book shows how Lotus learns to picture words and ideas with her hands and how she expresses herself through movement and dance, becoming the most famous performer in the Khmer kingdom.

Litchfield, Ada. *Making Room For Uncle Joe*. Niles, IL: Albert Whitman, 1984. Gr. 2-4.

Told from the point of view of a middle child, Dan, the book chronicles a family's reaction when their uncle who has Downs' Syndrome moves in with them. Misunderstanding, embarrassment, and resentment are among the first reactions as Litchfield demonstrates commonly held misconceptions about having Downs'. When Joe arrives, he is distressed about leaving his former surroundings until he makes friends with Dan's younger sister, Amy. Dan faithfully records the problems the family must confront with the new addition and even suggests that sometimes Joe "is more trouble than help." It takes a while for Dan to realize that Joe can fit in with his other friends, but his acceptance grows when Joe teaches them all how to bowl. Eventually, Joe feels better about himself, and after awhile, even Dan's older sister, Beth, comes to accept him. When his social worker finds him a new apartment and a new job, the whole family experiences a sense of sadness that he will have to move. Dan is ecstatic when he learns his mom and dad are willing to let Joe stay with them and still work at the sheltered workshop for individuals who have Downs'.

MacLachlan, Patricia. *Through Grandpa's Eyes*. New York: Harper and Row, 1980. Gr. K-4.

In a first person's child's eye view, a little boy named John describes the home of his blind grandpa and tells how Grandpa copes with this disability by honing his senses of touch, hearing and smell. The narrator is fascinated by his grandpa's abilities to know about things without actually seeing them and repeats the title phrase often as he plays and listens with his Grandpa. As John discovers his own senses--through the smells of marigolds and hot bread, through the sounds of the spring rain and flowing water, and through the touch of wet clay and hot tea, he realizes that Grandpa can indeed see even though he is blind. As he goes to bed, John knows that a whole new world of sensitivity has been opened for him. Because he has looked through Grandpa's eyes, he will never be the same.

Martin, Jr., Bill and John Archambault. *Knots On A Counting Rope*. New York: Henry Holt, 1980. Gr. K-4.

This beautifully illustrated picture book uses watercolors to tell the story of a young Indian boy as he recounts his birth and how he copes with his congenital blindness. The boy's grandfather helps him remember his fragile and sickly childhood and the hopes his family had for his future despite his handicaps. The boy tells how he feels colors, morning, the sky, and a rainbow and how his pony allows him to see. Winning a race with his pony named Rainbow allows the boy, Strength of the Blue Horses, to find courage to face his 'darkness'. Grandfather's repetition of the boy's victories are recorded by knots on a counting rope so that one day the boy will be able to retell his own story for himself or for his children.

Meyer, Donald, Patricia Bedasy, and Rebecca Fewell. *Living With A Brother Or Sister With Special Needs: A Book For Sibs*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1985. Gr. 5 and up.

This book has a special section for parents and grown-ups but is especially designed for siblings whose brothers and sisters are differently-abled. Chapter one discusses friends, anger, unselfishness, guilt, over-involvement, worry and loneliness as factors that siblings must confront. Chapter two deals with mental retardation while other problems involving speech, hearing, sight and behavior are analyzed in Chapter three. Chapter four deals with birth defects while five and six discuss epilepsy and cerebral palsy. An appendix lists helpful books (concentrating on individual handicaps) for young readers to discuss.

Rabe, Berniece. *The Balancing Girl*. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1981. Gr. K-3.

A perfect picture book about Margaret who although she uses a wheelchair is very good at balancing, especially when she walks with crutches. As the story progresses, she practices balancing, using magic marker, building blocks and cylinders and spheres. The one person who can't accept Margaret is Tommy, who protests that everything she balances is simple and who often knocks down her projects. As their class plans for a carnival to raise money, Margaret devises a game involving dominoes. She balances them in a row and plans to sell tickets to determine who will start the domino reaction. Ironically, Tommy, who has tried to spoil the domino game several times, is chosen to push the first domino. Margaret is happy since she has raised the most money at the carnival. Everyone cheers for the balancing girl as the books ends.

Robinet, Harriet Gillem. *Ride The Red Cycle*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1980. Gr. 2-4.

Robinet, whose own son was crippled with cerebral palsy, wanted to write a book that reflected the anger, the dreams and victories of children with disabilities. This story follows Jerome and his frustration with his paralysis, which was caused by a viral infection in his brain when he was a baby. Mostly the book emphasizes Jerome's desire for independence and his wish to ride a tricycle. Robinet realistically portrays the demands of a differently-abled child makes on his parents and the fear they have before they can let him break away from their protection and try "normal" play. Fortunately, Jerome's father decides to try out his son's plan, but even then there are complications to fit a regular bike to Jerome's specifications. As they watch his struggle to ride, some observers consider Jerome's wish to be stubborn and foolish. For example, when his legs won't move in his first try, he is discouraged and must be pushed. Although Jerome undergoes falls and failures, eventually his determination leads him to achieve his goal and more. As the book ends, Jerome realizes that his determination and practice helped him to attain his initial goals and that there are more challenges waiting for him.

Rounds, Glen. *Blind Outlaw*. New York: Holiday House, 1980. Gr. 3-5.

The special relationship that develops between a blind range horse and a young mute boy is the topic of this book. The boy, never named, has a speech impediment and can't talk, but he does have a way of communicating with animals including a magpie, rabbits, and a coyote pup. He also establishes a relationship with a horse named Outlaw whom he eventually succeeds in taming. The importance of sounds, smell and touch to blind individuals is stressed through the horse's reaction to the boy. Moreover, the boy's inability to speak is shown to be an advantage which helps him to become the owner of a horse of his own--Outlaw.

Salis, Susan. *Only Love*. New York: Harper & Row, 1980. Gr. 8-12.

A hopeful story that matches Fran Anderson, sixteen, who is confined to a wheelchair, with a mysterious and angry young man named Lucas Hawkins who has lost his legs in a motorcycle accident. Fran's sense of mischief is still alive despite being paralyzed, and she is determined to live life to the fullest. Her feisty attitude helps other patients keep a positive attitude. Rehabilitation and doctor/nurse/patient relations are also a vital part of Fran's life. Though her relationship with Luke begins antagonistically, she becomes determined to force him out of his shell as well as convince him to try to recover using crutches and/or artificial legs. When their relationship turns to love, Fran is afraid to tell him of other physical problems including incontinence and a frail heart. In short, she is afraid to admit that she can love even though she is facing imminent death. Helping

one another to cope, these characters make readers realize that differently-abled individuals can and should live full lives despite negative prognoses.

Savitz, Harriet May. *The Lion-Hearted*. New York: John Day, 1975. Gr. 2-5.

Savitz writes about the change in attitude among the differently-abled population, about people of courage who want the rights long kept out of their reach--rights of transportation accessibility, education, social acceptance and understanding. This book like *On The Move* is about a paraplegic, Rennie, who has been paralyzed after a motorcycle accident, struggles to get back in the mainstream of high school despite the fact that some people there just see her as the "crippled" girl. Rennie's frustration at the obstacles put in her way by society eventually results in anger at those who refuse to accept her condition and just feel sorry for her. She succeeds in teaching both her parents and her boyfriend how to react to her inability to walk.

Slepian, Jan. *The Alfred Summer*. New York: Macmillan, 1980. Gr. 5-9.

The story of Lester, who has cerebral palsy and his friendship with Alfred who is mentally retarded. The two boys form the Brighton Beach Boat Building Brigade with 13 year old Myron and non-conformist Claire. This remarkable trio of so-called losers helps Lester discover the futility of bitterness and frustration about his condition and help him acknowledge that there are many ways of being special and many routes to freedom.

Stern, Sara Bonnett. *About Handicaps: An Open Family Book For Parents And Children Together*. New York: Walker & Co., 1974. Gr. K-2.

This book of photographs illustrates the fears children have about being different. Following Matthew and Joe, the reader sees how one child mocks another who seems different. The cruelty of hurting differently-abled people by striking out at them physically or by avoiding them is also discussed. Matthew tries to deny Joe's cerebral palsy. He meets a man at the store who has lost an arm as the result of a shooting accident. Matthew's father tries to make these events more acceptable by explaining why they happened and how the handicaps affect people. When Matthew sees Joe again he is more accepting, recognizing that this is just the way his friend is. This book features a text for adults as well as a text for children. The letter is in large print making the book appropriate for learners who can handle easy-to-read materials.

Strachan, Ian. *The Flawed Glass*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1989. Gr. 6-9.

Set in Ireland, this is the story of Shona, a young girl whose vivid and active mind is trapped in a body wracked by birth defects that do not allow her to speak clearly or apparently to exercise her mind. But her mother never gives up in trying to help Shona overcome her problems, doing muscle exercises and helping build up her control of her arms and legs. With the help of Carl, a young American who comes to live nearby, Shona discovers she is not “the flawed glass” of the title but that through another glass (a computer screen) she can finally demonstrate all she has learned but never been able to express.

Sullivan, Mary Beth, Alan J. Brightman and Joseph Blatt. *Feeling Free*. Reading, Mass: Addison Wesley, 1979. Gr. 1-6.

Based on the television series of the same name, this book features interviews and stories from children who have physical disabilities, abnormalities or learning problems. The text has several interactive exercises for teachers to use as they discuss being differently-abled. The exercises, ranging from role playing to learning sign language and Braille help children to understand what it means to be differently-abled. Cerebral palsy, blindness, dwarfism, deafness, retardation are just some of the conditions discussed.

Taylor, Theodore. *The Cay*. Garden City, N.J. Doubleday, 1969. Gr. 6-9.

Although often used to teach racial issues, this novel is also effective in its communication about blindness and how Philip learns to use his other senses to compensate for his lack of sight. The shift in Philip’s personality demonstrates how a so-called disability can work toward positive changes in an individual’s character.

Voight, Cynthia. *Izzy, Willy-Nilly*. New York: Atheneum, 1986. Gr. 5-10.

A young adult novel about a 15 year old girl, Isabel Lingard, who loses her leg in a car accident. Izzy experiences drastic changes in her life as she tries to “adjust” to being an “amputee.” As she confronts and conquers the practical tasks of everyday life, she also finds herself evaluating her inner personality, establishing new friendships and redefining who she really is.

Other Books About Handicaps For Young Readers

Autism

Gold, Phyllis. *Please Don't Say Hello*. Human Science Press, 1976.

Spence, Eleanor. *The Devil Hole*. Lothrop Lee and Shepard, 1977.

Spence, Eleanor. *The October Child*. Oxford University Press, 1976.

Blindness And Visual Handicaps

Eyerly, J. *The Seeing Summer*. J.B. Lippincott, 1981.

Grieg, Diane and Alan Brightman. *Laurie*. Scholastic's Feeling Free, 1978.

Kent, Deborah. *Belonging*. Ace Books, 1979.

Little, Jean. *Listen For The Singing*. E. P. Dutton, 1977.

McPhee, Richard. *Tom and Bear*. Thomas Y. Crowell, 1981.

Peterson, Palle. *Sally Can't See*. John Day Co., 1977.

Raskin, Ellen. *Spectacles*. Connecticut Printers, 1968.

Cerebral Palsy

Little, Jean. *Mine For Keeps*. Little Brown and Co., 1962.

Southall, Ivan. *Let The Balloon Go*. Methuen, 1968.

Deafness And Hearing Problems

Hlibok, Bruce. *Silent Dancer*. Messner, 1981.

Litchfield, A. *A Button In Her Ear*. Albert Whitman, 1976.

Peter, Diane. *Claire And Emma*. Adam and Charles Black, 1976.

Riskind, Mary. *Apple Is My Sign*. Houghton Mifflin, 1982.

Sullivan, Mary Beth and Linda Bourke. *A Show Of Hands*. Addison-Wesley, 1980.

Epilepsy

Girion, Barbara. *A Handful Of Stars*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1981.

Hermes, Patricia. *What If They Knew*. Harcourt Brace and Jovanovich, 1980.

Mental Retardation

Baldwin, Anne Norris. *A Little Time*. Viking Press, 1978.

Friis-Baastad, Babbis. *Don't Take Teddy*. Charles Schribner's Sons, 1967.

Hall, Lynn. *Sticks And Stones*. Follet, 1972.

Hirsch, Karen. *My Sister*. Carol Rhoda Books, 1977.

Larson, Hanne. *Don't Forget Tom*. Thomas Y. Crowell, 1978.

Little, Jean. *Take Wing*. Little Brown and Company, 1968.

Lynch, Maureen. *Mary Fran And Mo*. St. Martin's Press, 1979.

Reiff, Tana. *A Place For Everyone*. Fearon-Pitman, 1979.

Shyer, Marlene. *Welcome Home, Jellybean*. Granada, 1981.

Smith, Gene. *The Hayburners*. Dell, 1975.

Smith, Lucia. *A Special Kind Of Sister*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1977.

Wrightson, Patricia. *A Racehorse For Andy*. Harcourt Brace and World, 1968.

Physical Handicaps

Grealish, Charles and Mary Jane. *Hackett McGee*. Scholastic's Feeling Free, 1978.

Greenfield, Eloise and Alesia Revis. *Alesia*. Philomel, 1981.

Jessell, Camilla. *Mark's Wheelchair Adventure*. Methuen, 1975.

Prudence, Andrew. *Mister O'Brien*. Heinemann, 1972.

Savitz, Harriet. *Run, Don't Walk*. Accent Special Publications, 1979.

Savitz, Harriet. *Wheelchair Champions*. Harper and Row, 1978.

For those in upper grades the following films regarding handicaps would also be appropriate for discussion and appreciation during a week's activities devoted to the differently abled.

Correlations With Films

Mask, starring Cher and Eric Stoltz (physical deformity)

My Left Foot, starring Daniel Day Lewis (cerebral palsy)

What's Eating Gilbert Grape, starring Johnny Depp and Leonardo Di Caprio (mental retardation)

The Miracle Worker, starring Anne Bancroft and Patty Duke (blind, deaf)

Children Of A Lesser God, starring Marlee Matlin and William Hurt (deaf)

Rain Man, starring Dustin Hoffman and Tom Cruise (idiot savant)

Elephant Man, starring John Hurt (physical deformity)

The Man Without A Face, starring Mel Gibson (physical deformity)

Bill On His Own, starring Mickey Rooney (mental retardation)

Of Mice and Men, starring Gary Sinise and John Malkovich (mental retardation)

Episodes of the TV series, *Life Goes On* (Down's Syndrome)

Episodes of the TV series, *The Little House On The Prairie* (blindness)

Support Groups--Addresses

Also of interest to teachers are the following addresses of support organizations for siblings of differently-abled individuals:

Siblings Understanding Needs (SUN); Dept., of Pediatrics C-19; University of Texas Medical Branch; Galveston, Texas, 77550. (Publishes sibling newspaper.)

Siblings For Significant Change; 823 United Nations Plaza, Rm. 808; New York, NY 10017 (Information for families, refers siblings to events and services of interest.)

Youth Advocates For Retarded Citizens; 5522 University Ave.; Madison, WI 53714.

Siblings Helping Persons With Autism Through Resources And Energy (SHARE); National Society For Children And Adults With Autism, Suite 107; 1234 Massachusetts Ave., N.W.; Washington, D.C. 20005 (Scrapbook for siblings, newsletter for and about siblings, poster contest.)

Sibling Information Network; Dept. Of Educational Psychology, Box U-64; The University of Connecticut; Storrs, CN 06268 (Publishes newsletter for and about siblings with feature articles by siblings.)

National Information Center For Handicapped Children And Youth; 1555 Wilson Blvd.; Rosslyn, VA 22209 (General information on handicaps.)

Administrative Talk

Glen Kuck

The Administrator's Head-- What Goes On In There?

Administrators know the positive effects of confidence. They tell teachers to be confident. They tell students to be confident. They tell athletes to be confident. But what do they tell themselves?

The self-management of thought processes is crucial for an administrator. Two contrasting patterns of thinking have been termed "opportunity thinking" and "obstacle thinking." An opportunity thinker views a challenging situation as an opportunity to find constructive solutions. An obstacle thinker focuses on reasons to give up and turn away from the problem. (Neck, p. 24)

Obstacle thinkers may suffer from some of the following dysfunctional thinking patterns: they may accept only perfection and therefore be discouraged with anything less than perfection; they may dwell on a negative detail which distorts their overall perceptions; they may refuse to acknowledge their successes; they may exaggerate the effects of negative factors and minimize positive ones; they may automatically use negative labels to describe events, themselves, and others; and they may blame themselves for negative outcomes that were in reality caused by other factors. (Burns)

For example, let's suppose a teacher comes to see a principal after school. She's upset with a student who continues to disrupt her classroom. She feels helpless because her attempts at changing the boy's behavior haven't had much effect and her conversations with his parents haven't helped either.

One principal may see the obstacles. He may say to himself, "Well, I guess the whole school year is shot, now that Miss Jones is on my back. Not only is Miss Jones angry at me, but I suppose I'll be getting an irate phone call from the boy's parents too. I guess this whole thing is my fault. I should never have accepted that boy into this school three years ago."

Another principal may see the opportunities this problem presents. As he listens to Miss Jones, he mentally puts the problem into perspective. He reminds himself of similar problems previously encountered by Miss Jones and other teachers and how solutions were ultimately found. He listens patiently, asking Miss Jones to articulate the facts and her feelings. He suggests possible

courses of action and they discuss the merits of each. He offers his help in a variety of ways. He makes sure that both he and Miss Jones know that constructive steps will be taken as they work together toward solutions to the problem. When the meeting has ended, he follows through with what he promised Miss Jones. As he does, he continues to reassure himself of his ability to manage the situation successfully.

Administrators who are able to project a positive inner image of themselves are more likely to be proactive as they lead their schools. They know when to push, when to sit back, how to involve others, and how to evaluate options. They are secure with their own sense of being. They don't feel threatened by board members, teachers, students, or parents. They are open to others and they encourage the testing of new ideas. If the idea fails, they see it as an idea that didn't work, not as a personal failure. (Blumberg, pp. 179, 182)

Optimism on the part of an administrator is helpful. But being a good administrator goes beyond merely being a Pollyanna. Optimism is no replacement for inner security, born out of Christian hope. An optimist may say, "Don't worry, it won't happen." A Christian says, "It may happen, but God gives us the ability to cope."

The ministry of an administrator is buoyed up by the promises of God and the experiences of the administrator which testify to the fact that God keeps His promises. A Christian exudes an air of confidence, not so much in himself, but in his God.

What's inside the head of an administrator? Somewhere behind the area where the memory of last week's faculty meeting is kept, to the left of the "must do today" list, and next to the section of neurons devoted to school finances, is the area where the "what I believe about myself" section can be found. Among the articles in this area are the memories of past accomplishments and a picture of a smiling God, reaching down to hold his hand.✠

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DCE Expressions

Steve Fehl

Are DCE's In The Intersection?

Approaching The Intersection

At the May, 1996 Convocation of the Lutheran Education Association, The Rev. Dr. John Westerhoff shared the story of a Mennonite School he visited. As chapel began one morning a student got up and announced that an earthquake had hit a portion of Mexico. Prayers were offered, but nothing else was said. Later that day an announcement was made that three trucks of donated goods were leaving for Mexico. Dr. Westerhoff was astounded at such action, and when he asked a student how this happened the student simply responded, "This is what our Lord calls us to do."

The 1995 study of youth and adults in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod "*Congregations At Crossroads*" shows that called workers and laity alike have strong backgrounds and understandings of Lutheran doctrine and beliefs. However they also note that, "The LCMS's traditional strength in doctrine and beliefs is not being experienced and lived out in the lives of most members in congregations" (p.31). Unlike the Mennonite students, many of the people sitting in our pews are not moved to do and act as our Lord would have us do and act. The research uncloaks the frustration and struggle that many of us have experienced as we have worked to move people from a faith of the head to a faith of the heart. While this may not be a startling new insight, it does raise the question--are DCEs in the intersection of congregations at the crossroads?

Where Strengths Intersect Challenges

Two areas of great strength are pointed out in this study--[a] many of our people perceive a strong Word and Sacrament ministry being made visible in their parish life through inspiring worship experiences (p. 26); and [b] called staff, and laity are enthusiastic and committed to their congregation and its ministry (p. 29). These findings tell us that the people in our pews are people who know the fundamentals of the Faith, find their times of worship to be rich and meaningful, and have a hopeful view of the future when it comes to their

congregation's ministry opportunities. Yet with such hopefulness, the question remains--why does it seem that Christian education is so ineffective in so many congregations?

Three significant issues emerged from this study that perhaps explain the lethargy many of us experience in developing effective Christian education--[a] lack of intentional support and education for parents; [b] lack of innovative models for adult education which recognize the unique needs and styles of adults; and [c] lack of examination of programs and activities to see how they contribute to the congregation's mission (p. 29). These three issues suggest a re-focusing of our educational pursuits in congregations. The questions raised relate to supporting and assisting the adult members of our congregations in developing functional Christian skills, as parents and people, which they can use in their lives day in and day out. The implication is that too much of our Christian education programming stays with the head and "knowing" what to do, instead of practicing with the heart and "acting" what to do.

The Intersection Of Local Congregation and DCES Ministry

I see implications for the work of the Director of Christian Education in the parish setting--[a] our ministry has its foundation in Word and Sacrament; [b] congruity of programming is important for faith formation; and [c] an adjustment to teaching the meaning of service and outreach.

As *"Congregations At Crossroads"* points out, the vast majority of our people still understand that worship is the core of our existence as a community. They understand that in the context of worship the Word is proclaimed and the Sacraments are administered. This perspective reminds us that the structure and focus of our educational ministry must grow out of the worship life of the congregation. Yet we cannot allow worship to simply become one more option in a menu of involvements.

The second implication is the development of educational ministries that have congruity. In a society no longer well versed in Christian thought and belief, the local congregation needs to provide Christian education that enables faith talk between parents and children, between spouses, and in other relationships. Constructing a Christian education program which takes its cue from the worship setting by providing learning opportunities for adults and children around these themes allows for such conversation. Using curriculums and study designs that draw individuals into a deeper study of these themes enables their growth and builds bridges for faith conversations in the home and community.

The third area involves challenging laity to see their service to God in the community and not just in the congregation. The application of Christian faith talk

only becomes real when the Christian person is encouraged to live out that faith in the day to day relationships of his or her life, through volunteering to serve others in need, or listening to a person in deep turmoil because of the choices and circumstances of their lives. Such action application must become an intentional part of our Christian education ministry in the congregation. To truly fulfill the Great Commission is to act it out in settings where people may see and experience that saving grace for themselves.

The Intersection Of College Preparation And DCES Ministry

This study also has implications for the professional organization TEAM: [a] providing critical support for the Christian educator; [b] challenging the field DCE to further professional growth and understanding, and [c] defining and monitoring the competencies for ongoing DCE ministry.

Almost everyone reading this article has been touched, either personally or through a close friend, by the dramatic and sometimes erratic changes taking place in parish ministry. TEAM needs to be a safe corner at the difficult intersection of parish life and DCE ministry. TEAM must find ways to say to the parish professional, “We support you, we care about you, and we will stand by you whenever and wherever we are needed.” This will not always be a popular stance, but it is a stance which will ultimately express the appropriate value of our field professionals.

But while being that safe corner, TEAM must also work to involve the field professional in on-going growth both professionally and personally. If the field DCE is to lead an education ministry with focus and congruity, he or she must be a life-long learner striving always to connect knowledge with leadership and effective teaching. The sophistication of our culture requires the field DCE to be constantly growing and learning about the how’s and why’s of effective Christian education.

Ultimately the measure of this on-going learning is to show the competencies needed to be effective in the local congregation. TEAM needs to step forward in the process of defining these competencies, to establish a system for monitoring and certifying such competencies. The needs of the local congregation demand that the professional organization expect the field DCE to show competencies and provide capable leadership.

Directing Traffic In The Intersection

In reading this, it is easy to assume that field DCEs know what needs to be done and to take a “no brainer” attitude toward much of what *“Congregations At*

Crossroads” has to say. The more difficult task is to dialog with one another concerning the questions and issues raised about how we can better nurture the Christian faith and life in the people we serve, moving them from a “head” faith to a “heart” faith. This dialogue demands careful study of the Scriptures, prayerful and discerning conversation, and quiet individual reflection.

In our church body this is not an easy task. The present environs of our Synod do not encourage dialog about such matters. When conversation is attempted it is too often reduced to orthodoxy and truth versus feeling and perception. However, if we do not dialogue we will soon discover that we are having less and less impact on the lives of the people who need it most--the Christian faithful, as well as their friends and acquaintances who need to hear and experience the power of the Gospel in their lives. The outcome of such neglect is that we, as DCEs, may be in the intersection of congregations at crossroads--but we may also be getting run over.†



Reporter's Notebook

Middle School Educators Give 'Looping' High Marks

Baltimore

Middle school educators who follow the practice of banding together the same students with the same teachers for more than one year give it high marks, a recent survey shows.

Researchers at the University of Florida in Gainesville presented the results of the survey this month at the National Middle School Association's annual convention here. The Columbus, Ohio-based organization drew about 9,800 attendees to the Oct. 31-Nov. 3 event.

The researchers identified 70 schools nationwide that use such “long-term teacher-student relationships,” also known as looping. Thirty-three schools in 14 states, or 55 percent of those asked, took part in the survey, which was conducted in the 1995-96 school year. Educators, parents, and students responded.

The vast majority of schools in the survey kept students and teachers together for either two or three years. Seventeen of the schools grouped students from different grade levels; 11 used “student-teacher progression,” in which students from one grade level stayed with the same teachers. Five schools used a variation of one of those methods.

Education Week, 13 November 1996

First Person Singular

Carl Schalk

Silent Times Ahead?

When I was a child, it was not uncommon for families--parents, grandparents, and children alike--to gather around the piano and sing. *The Golden Book Of Favorite Songs*, the collection of choice, helped establish a repertoire of songs most Americans knew and could sing from memory. Singing was an everyday activity, something families did together, and singing a common repertoire of songs--like "America The Beautiful," "Home On The Range," and "Down By The Riverside"--brought us together.

Today children rarely sing, either at home or school. At home the piano is gone. At school, public or private, singing has been largely abandoned as a normal part of the curriculum, treated at best as an "extra," ready for the chopping block when budgets are tight. One can no longer assume that children grow up with a common repertoire of songs--or that they sing at all.

As part of their "Get America Singing Again" campaign, this past summer the Music Educators National Conference published a list of 42 songs they feel Americans must continue to learn and sing to preserve an important part of American culture:

Amazing Grace, America (My Country 'Tis Of Thee), America The Beautiful, Battle Hymn Of The Republic, Blue Skies, Danny Boy, De Colores, Dona Nobis Pacem, Do-Re-Mi, Down by the Riverside, Frere Jacques, Give My Regards To Broadway, God Bless America, God Bless The U.S.A., Havah Nagilah, He's Got The Whole World In His Hands, Home On The Range, I've Been Working On The Railroad, If I Had A Hammer, Let There Be Peace On Earth, Lift Ev'ry Voice And Sing, Michael (Row The Boat Ashore), Music Alone Shall Live, My Bonnie Lies Over The Ocean, Oh! Susanna, Oh, What A Beautiful Morning, Over My Head, Puff The Magic Dragon, Rock-A-My Soul, Sakura, Shalom Chaverim, She'll Be Comin' Round The Mountain, Shenandoah, Simple Gifts, Sometimes I Feel Like A Motherless Child, The Star-Spangled Banner, Swing Low, Sweet Chariot, This Land Is Your Land, This Little Light Of Mine, Yesterday, and Zip-A-Dee-Doo-Dah.

"We have a whole generation that has grown up without singing songs like these--songs that are part of our culture, part of who we are," said Will

Schmid, president of the 90-year-old group representing 65,000 music educators nationwide.

Are our churches and schools doing much better? Is it possible to develop a list of hymns and songs that are part of our heritage and are basic to Lutheran worship? Is it possible to teach one new hymn a week in every classroom of our parish schools? Are we teaching a repertoire of songs that reflects our heritage and identity as Christians?

The place to start is with the hymnal, the book which should properly assume the position of primary importance in the worship and catechetical life of the congregation. Then help teachers learn to teach children to sing by singing for and with their pupils.

If congregations are not persistently intentional about teaching and handing on their heritage of Christian song to future generations, the days ahead may be bleak indeed. Congregations need to realize that the inconsequential fluff promoted as Christian song and being taught to children in countless schools, Sunday Schools, and parishes is simply not good enough.

The lamentable state of singing in too many congregations of “the singing church” will be cured not by new and larger sound systems or by a frantic search for ever new and faddish repertoires in an attempt to be “relevant and meaningful.” It will be cured when congregations patiently, winsomely, and persistently teach the treasury of the church’s song to its children and use it regularly in their worship.

The alternative is for silent times ahead--and we shall have no one to blame but ourselves when the song dies out.✠



Ways To Cope With Stress

- Use your MasterCard to pay your Visa and vice-versa.
- Pop some popcorn without putting the lid on.
- When someone says, “Have a nice day,” tell them you have other plans.
- Make a list of things to do that you’ve already done, and cross them out.

Multiplying Ministries

Rich Bimler

Words, Words, Words--And More Words!

Have you ever thought that we could sure communicate better with each other if we didn't use so many words? I have. It struck me the other evening. Hannah, our non-talking one-year old granddaughter, was pointing and "ah-ing," and "oh-ing," and grunting to get her point across. And I worked hard at trying to figure out what she wanted. A few minutes later, Rachel, her five-year old sister, was jabbering faster than the speed of light. And I must confess that I wasn't listening to all of her words, because there were so many of them! I found myself trying to listen more to the non-verbals and strange sounds of Hannah than to the clear and pointed words of Rachel. A coincidence? I don't think so.

I have also been amazed at the prayers I sometimes hear that go on and on and on. I know--I've prayed them myself. I'm ready to write a new book entitled *Sermons I've Heard While Listening To Closing Prayers!*

Perhaps it is time to have a moratorium on words. We just use so many of them, in so many different ways, and often spoil the "silence" with our verbosity. It's not only the length of sermons I react to, but also my own wordiness in conversation, in leaving messages on answering machines, in voice mail, and even in articles I write!

Perhaps we need to once again remember that the Lord has given us two ears and one mouth to remind us that we need to listen twice as much as we talk! I'm not sure Martin Luther ever said that, but I think he should have!

Words can sometimes become barriers to understanding and also to relationships. We need to remember that the Lord sent us *The Word*, Jesus Christ, who became flesh for us, and is among us (John 1:14). He did not send us words, words, words, but rather, the Word who became incarnate in a death and life relationship with us. And even all of our theological "words," such as forgiveness, sanctification, justification, to name only a few, are not just "words,"--but rather they are relationships which the Lord gives to us as free gifts.

Sometimes opening our mouths leads to other problems also:

There is a story of a turtle who wanted to spend the winter in Florida, but

he knew he could never walk that far. He convinced a couple of geese to help him, each taking one end of a piece of rope, while he clamped his vise-like jaws in the center. The flight went fine until someone on the ground looked up in admiration and asked, "Who in the world thought of that?" Unable to resist the chance to take credit, the turtle opened his mouth to shout, "I did --."

I love Saint Francis of Assisi who says, "Preach the Gospel at all times, and if necessary, use words!" Yes, we do need to proclaim our faith in the Lord through our words as well as our actions. But perhaps we can also help each other realize that our faith is shared both in speaking and in demonstrating what the Lord has done for us. And often times, as someone has already said, "Actions do speak louder than words."

Let's encourage each other to certainly speak our faith. Let's also encourage each other to listen more intently and to help those trying to listen to us to sort through our wordiness which, at times, becomes a barrier to crisp and clean communication.

The Word, Jesus Christ, *is* among us. With the Psalmist, let's help each other pray that "the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart" are pleasing to The Word of Life!

Some final words, just for comparison:

Saint Matthew's Easter account -- 134 words

Gettysburg Address -- 271 words

Bag of Lays Potato Chips -- 401 words

IRS Form 1040EZ -- 418 words

This "Multiplying Ministries" article -- 675✠

Secondary Sequence

Nathaniel Grunst

Vision, Mission, Ministry, Message

Not too many things last forever. Earthly experience is cyclical. With the ups and the downs, the ins and the outs, on average life seems to be average. Businesses come and go. Buildings are built and replaced or rehabbed. Lofts as dwellings replace lofts as warehouses. Even church buildings recycle as offices or condos. Teachers colleges become universities. Lutheran schools become something beyond their original parameters of nurturing the children of the faithful.

Every institution is involved in some form of soul-searching during this decade. The spirit of the times is challenging the existence of almost every corporate structure relative to its original purpose and measures the efficiency of operations with detailed scrutiny. The individual's question of existence, "Why am I here?" is paraphrased to, "What are you as a corporation good for in this information age?"

Each institution involved in strategic planning must carefully consider the sequence of basic questions regarding existence. Successful strategic planners do not ignore the legacy of the past. Without fail, there was some originating purpose that first established the institution. A cornerstone may be the simplest source of perspective. In our high school the core message is, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." John 17:3. Ethical integrity requires that we make our new plans in accord with proper stewardship of our founders' trust and intentions while accommodating to new needs, conditions and memberships. This is known as the story of the *vision, or the originating purpose*.

The *mission, or the sustaining purpose* impels collective answers to a variety of questions: Why are we here? Who is in charge? Of what? Who needs us? Who wants us? Where do we expect to be in five years? What will we look like then? How much will it cost? Where will the money come from? Who are our real owners? Do we have any ethical owners? These answers are the driving information to the formulation of a mission statement which needs to be short, accurate and memorable. Every worker should be able to remember and repeat a well-written mission statement. Ski resorts and theme

parks have this tightly in place. Every school should be as direct in its efforts to solicit, serve and satisfy.

The word *ministry* is rather frequently used interchangeably and indiscriminately with the word *mission*. Linguistically there is a significant difference between the two concepts. Ministry is of Latin derivation and reflects attending to or a spirit of serving another person. Mission, also of Latin roots, connotes a sending of a person for a purpose. As we traditionally use these words, **ministry** is the *spirit* in which we fulfill our *mission*.

It is then relatively easy for an institution to generate its story. If it is consistent with its founding fathers' vision, and if it develops a careful perspective on its updated mission statement, and if it has the correct tone and spirit for its ministry, then it is ready to develop its story or *message*. The message is encoded in two distinctive ways. First, the story is told in words. This is often in the form of various media types: newsletters, brochures, visuals of all kinds, advertising, presentations, and even word of mouth. Second, and most important, the message is encoded in deeds. The individuals employed by the institution literally live the *message*.

Someone needs to compose and communicate the story. Typically that is the top person in the organization. The story is modified continuously, ideally, as time passes. The message needs to be supported by the Board, staff and even those served. The message needs to be apprehendable, understandable, and experiential for everyone involved. Everyone contributes to the message. Everyone *is* the message. Howard Gardner in his book *Leading Minds: An Anatomy of Leadership* (Basic Books, 1995) details the significance of the ability to create a story. Mixed messages and confused metaphors only undermine and defeat the ministry, if not the mission itself. Thus, the story needs constant repetition for clarity of detail. Just as spouses need to exchange verbal "I love you" statements and also must act out the many ways of showing affection, so the institution requires constant refueling of the message. A unified story starts with the leader. If it is the product of the sequence, vision, mission, ministry and message, it has every hope of corroborating the institution.✚



"It goes without saying that you should never have more children than you have car windows" --Erma Bombeck *Christian Home & School, Oct/Nov 1996*

Teaching The Young

Shirley K. Morgenthaler

Teachers And Teaching

What's your role in the classroom? Are you a tell-er of information? A do-er of projects? A plan-ner of lessons? A bring-er of stuff? A make-er of materials? A questioner of ideas? A facilitator of learning? A provisioner of centers? An enforcer of rules? An observer of children? An implementer of curriculum? A participant in learning?

Each of these roles is important. Which do you consider your primary role? Which is most comfortable? Which one makes the most difference for young children's learning? Which one takes the greatest portion of your time? Is the one that takes the most time also your primary role? Is it the one that will make the most difference for children's learning?

One of the theorists who is currently being discussed and re-discovered is Lev Vygotsky. This Russian psychologist whose work has just recently begun to be translated into English was a contemporary of Piaget and Montessori in the beginning decades of this century. His work is particularly applicable to our understanding of the teacher's role in the classroom and in children's learning. This is a contribution that few other theorists have made to the same degree. Piaget's work focused on the child's understanding and the inner workings of children's concepts. Montessori, while spending time focusing on the teacher's role in presenting materials, emphasized the child's use of those materials and the role of the environment in supporting children's independent learning or auto-education.

Because the work of Piaget and Montessori was translated into English several decades ago, teachers have long had the benefit of their work and their thinking. However, because of their emphasis of the child's interaction with the environment and its materials, careful study of the role of the teacher has too long been sidelined, if not ignored.

Vygotsky's work and its current accessibility to American educators change that picture. There are many concepts and perspectives which can be taken from Vygotsky's work. Since the role of the teacher in working with children has received the least attention from other theorists, let's start there.

Two important ideas which students of Vygotsky's ideas are currently working with are mediation and the idea of the zone of proximal

development(ZPD).

Mediation is the notion that the teacher's task in the classroom is to mediate learning for children. From this perspective, the teacher provides intermediate steps between what the child knows, what the child needs to know. This means that the adult needs to know what the child knows, what the child needs to know or is working toward knowing, and what steps would be helpful in guiding the child from "here to there." In the mediation role, the teacher moves from being a passive observer (a la Piaget) or an active provider (a la Montessori) to being an active participant and guide of the child/s activity. The teacher's task, according to Vygotsky, is to know what the child's learning goal is, and to provide materials, ask questions, and offer guidance toward that goal.

The Vygotskian teacher is an active participant with children's activities, asking questions, offering suggestions, and knowing "what's next" for each child. This is no small task!

The notion of mediation brings us quickly to Vygotsky's theory of the ZPD. To understand this idea, you need to visualize two concentric circles, one inside the other. The smaller circle represents the tasks and activities and concepts which the child has mastered and in which the child can engage without help or guidance. The larger of the circles represents the tasks, activities and concepts which the child can tackle given help, guidance and encouragement from an adult or more knowledgeable peer.

This might mean providing a pattern frame as the child works toward understanding patterning well enough to create and complete patterns on her or his own. It might mean providing a definition for leaf structures as the child is working toward independently identifying leaves on different types of trees. It might also mean providing a structure for writing a story that includes making a series of blank lines under a picture which the child has drawn to represent the number of words which the child has already identified for a sentence about the picture.

In operating within each child's ZPD, the adult needs first of all to observe in order to determine what the child's independent level of functioning is. Then the adult needs to determine what question, what strategy, or what suggestion will be helpful in guiding the child beyond his or her current independent level of activity and concepts.

In this theory, the teacher does far more than simply observe and appreciate what the child is currently doing. The teacher also does more than simply provide another slightly more complex activity or set of materials. The teacher is an active participant in the child's construction of concepts and of learning. This participation is rarely in the "telling" mode. Rather, it is guiding, questioning, encouraging, giving answers. It is also knowing when to provide further structure, when to give assistance, when to back off and simply observe. This aspect of

Vygotskian activity is highly individualistic and requires the teacher to be a student of each individual child in the classroom. It also requires that the teacher know what concept or strategy the child is currently working on in order to provide guidance and encouragement in the right direction. This means knowing the stages of the development of numeration concepts and the development of concepts about reading and writing--especially writing! It also means knowing which questions about the world around them young children are most often asking, and what those questions really mean in terms of what children want to know. Teachers need to be experts not only in child development and the development of children's learning, but also expert in the interest and learning bents of each of the children in their classrooms. That's a tall order.

The place to begin is with the individuals in your classroom, and with the interests and questions that they individually and collectively have. What do they want to know? What do they *really* want to know? How can you guide them toward discovering those things? What questions can you ask? What materials and activities can you provide to guide their investigations and discoveries?

Becoming a student of Vygotsky requires each of us to examine our roles as teachers and to develop and discover ways to make children's learning more meaningful and focused. Children *don't* always discover things on their own. They also need the guidance and mediation of adults who care about their learning, who understand what they are trying to learn, and who are willing to discover ways to guide that learning.

Are you ready to take on the challenge?†

Author's note: The following book will provide the budding Vygotskian teacher with resources for exploring this important topic.

Berk, L., & Winsler, A. (1995). *Scaffolding children's learning: Vygotsky and early education*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

The Gospel According To Winnie-The-Pooh

Philip Heinze

Chapter Three In Which We Begin Again

Perhaps we should begin in the beginning, even though it would appear that by Chapter Three we have already begun. But then this particular beginning never really stops beginning, and because it is never really finished beginning it never ends, which is rather odd, since most things that begin end up ending. But not this beginning, and it's a good thing too, because this is not the type of beginning that you would wish to end. It's not at all like a visit to the dentist, which most people wish would end before it begins. No, this beginning is quite welcome to continue.

I generally find beginnings to be friendly sorts of things, not at all like most endings. And this beginning is particularly friendly, because it is one of those things someone does for you that you can't do for yourself. After it has been done for you it's yours and you get to keep it and use it whenever you like, which in the case of this particular beginning, is pretty much all the time.

The beginning is a promise, a promise experienced in Water and Word, a promise of never ending, unconditional love, which is the only kind of love worth having. It is God's promise to treat us, not as we are used to being treated, or used to treating, as the case may be, but as God's own dearly, loved children. Which, when I think about it, is quite a friendly sort of surprise.

“How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called the children of God. And that is what we are!” 1 John 3:1

Pooh and Piglet were tracking tracks in the snow around a small spinney of Larch trees. Each time they came round the spinney there were more tracks than before. This was more than a little frightening and so they began to think of a brave way to end their tracking adventure. And then, just at the right time, they heard a voice from above. It was Christopher Robin sitting in his big Oak tree. As he came down the tree he asked Pooh and Piglet what they were doing going round and round the spinney.

*“Wait a moment,” said Winnie-the-Pooh, holding up his paw.
He sat down and thought, in the most thoughtful way he could think. Then*

he fitted his paw into one of the Tracks... and then he scratched his nose twice and stood up.

"Yes," said Winnie-the-Pooh.

"I see now," said Winnie-the-Pooh.

"I have been Foolish and Deluded," said he, "and I am a Bear of No Brain at All."

"You're the Best Bear in All the World," said Christopher Robin.

(Winnie-the-Pooh by A.A. Milne; E.P. Dutton & Co., New York; 1950, p. 41)

I don't remember the first time I felt like Pooh, foolish and deluded lamenting my lack of brain, but I don't imagine it took very much living. In fact, it seems to me that there is much in life that would lead one to Pooh's sorry conclusion.

Self doubt is very frightening, kind of like tracking tracks that keep multiplying. So some hide their fear by pretending not to care until they pretend so well that they really don't. Others hide in make believe worlds where pain and fear is deadened by intoxication until they really do die. Still others try to control their fear by attacking with fists or words or silence until there is no one left to attack except themselves.

And that is why this beginning that never ends is so important. When everything and everyone, including yourself, has convinced you that you are foolish and deluded and are a Bear of No Brain at All, God tells us differently.

"You're the Best Bear in All the World." "And that is what we are!"†



Powers Of Observation

It seems natural to shush up children when they make their running commentaries on the world, or to laugh off their comments as cuteness. That is a mistake to be guarded against, because it may detract from their full potential in the long run. Children who are regularly subject to put-downs tend to become inhibited because they learn to keep their thoughts to themselves to avoid embarrassment. They may also stop making the random observations that trigger their comments in the belief that nobody is interested in what they experience.

Royal Bank Letter, Fall, 1996

A Final Word

George C. Heider, President
Concordia University, River Forest, Illinois

"Teaching as Patriotism"

As I write these words, we stand less than a week following the November elections. As you read them, the new terms of the president, Congress, and many other public officials will have recently begun. The "public square" is rightly in the forefront of our thoughts.

For many Americans, the recent political campaign was a great disappointment. For some, of course, that disappointment resides especially in the results (whether in the executive or legislative branch). For many more, however, there is a gnawing sense of unease centered in the quality of candidates and of the modern political debate. Above all, it seems, it is issues of personal economic advantage which are preeminent in the choices we make as citizens.

What contribution can we make to this situation as Christians and, specifically, as Lutheran Christian educators? Some will argue that we have nothing at all to say in this capacity. From this perspective, our focus must necessarily remain on matters of faith and, ultimately, on heaven as our true native land. While there is a danger here of constructing and then demolishing a "straw man," it is fair to assert, I believe, that this perspective has all too often led to excessive disengagement of Lutheran Christians from the political process. One can take very seriously Luther's doctrine of the two kingdoms (and thereby resist any attempt to establish the Kingdom of God on earth) while insisting that God's rule in *both* the Kingdom of Power and the Kingdom of Grace mandates our full participation in both.

In the classroom (at whatever level) this insight suggests that we reflect with our students on issues of leadership and on the issues of our day, not with the intent of inculcating what we see as *the* Christian position on this or that matter, but with the goal of ensuring that our students bring their faith to bear on them. Nowhere, I believe, are the much-ballyhooed "critical thinking skills" more needed than in the public arena, where complex issues must be considered from a variety of perspectives before one finally says, "I understand the complexities, and I respect the right of others to differ, but based on the facts as I know them and the values which I bring as a Christian, I think as follows."

That still leaves the question of personal involvement in the elective process. Somehow we must get past the notion of political officeholders as invariably venal and of "politician" as a dismissive epithet. The notion of *public service* as an honorable pursuit needs refurbishment. To be sure, this, too, is a complex matter. But unless we want simply to opt out of the process (and then—deservedly—take what we get), we need to encourage our students to become involved in working for local, state, and national candidates who evidence principled leadership, with an eye toward moving them to eventual participation themselves, whether as members of local boards and councils, or as full-time elected officials.

It's hard to imagine what more patriotic thing a Lutheran Christian teacher could do.✠



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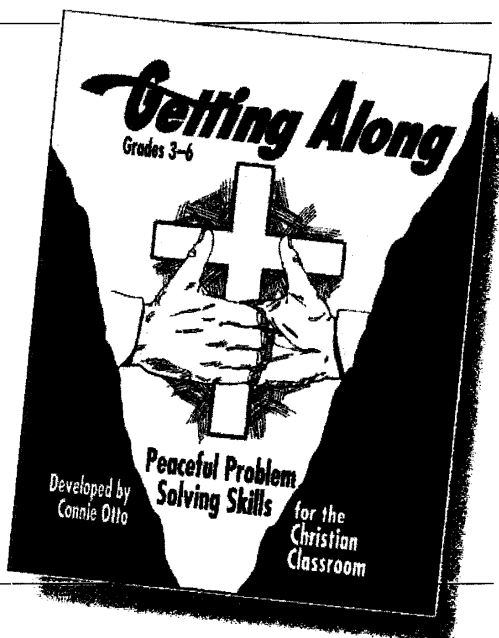
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